

The Changing Gender-references of Words for Items of Clothing

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Sukupuoli kulttuurisena konstruktiona (gender) on muuttuva ja rakentuu sosiaalisessa vuorovaikutuksessa myös kielen kautta. Näin ollen myös sukupuoli, johon vaatesana viittaa voi muuttua. Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää tätä aiemmin vähän tutkittua aluetta.

Tutkimuskysymykset ovat seuraavat: 1) Miten ja miksi vaatesanojen sukupuoliwiittaukset ovat muuttuneet Norrin (1996, 1998) tutkimuksista? 2) Tukeeko myös korpusaineisto kahdesta korpuksesta (The British National Corpus (BNC) ja The Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE)) Norrin (1998) tutkimuksessaan esittelemiä viittä sukupuoliwiittausten muuttumisen vaihetta? 3) Onko Norrin viiden vaiheen malli sovellettavissa myös muihin vaatesanoihin?

Tutkimus keskittyy vain brittienglantiin, jotta tulosten vertailu Norrin tutkimukseen olisi mahdollista. Tutkimus yhdistää sekä kvalitatiivisia että kvantitatiivisia tutkimusmenetelmiä. Tutkimuksen aineistona on seitsemän sanakirjaa ja korpusaineistona BNC ja GloWbE. BNC sisältää materiaalia 1990-luvun alkupuoliskolta, kuten Norrin (1998) käyttämä sanomalehtikorpus. GloWbE sisältää internetissä julkaistua materiaalia 2010-luvun alkuvuosilta. Kukin vaatesanan esiintymä luokiteltiin käyttäjän mukaan: mies/poika, nainen/tyttö, tai neutraali (sukupuolta ei mainittu).

Tutkimuksen keskeisenä tuloksena on, että Norrin viisi vaihetta ovat validit myös BNC:n korpusaineiston perusteella. Kun Norrin tutkimuksen tuloksia verrattiin uudempaan korpusaineistoon (GloWbE) ja sanakirjoihin, etenkin *swimsuit* ja *undies* ovat jatkaneet Norrin (1998) havaitsemaa muutosta kohti unisex-pukeutumista. Molemmat sanat olivat ensin vain naisten vaatteita, mutta aineiston perusteella nähdään että niitä käyttävät myös miehet. Tosin muutos ei ole niin pitkällä, että miehiä ja naisia olisi näiden vaatteiden käyttäjinä yhtä paljon, kuten vaiheessa kolme, vaan *undies* ja *swimsuit* ovat edelleen vaiheessa kaksi. Norrin (1998) tutkimuksen ulkopuolelta mukaan otettiin mm. *leggings*. Se on ensin tarkoittanut etenkin miesten tiukasti koko jalan tai vain sen alaosan ympärille kiinnitettäviä suojuksia. Tämän aineiston perusteella uudempi merkitys naisten (ja lasten) tiukasti-istuvina housuina on yleisempi, eli *leggings* on edennyt vaiheeseen neljä, jossa uudempi sukupuoliwiittaus on yleisempi kuin alkuperäinen.

Tutkituissa sanoissa havaittiin muutosta sekä alun perin miesten vaatteista kohti naisten vaatteita, että naisten vaatteista kohti miesten vaatteita. Tätä tutkimusta voitaneen käyttää vertailukohtana tulevilla tutkimuksilla. Lisäksi tutkimus todistaa, miten tärkeää sukupuoliwiittausten huomiointi on sanakirjoissa, koska kuten tämäkin tutkimus osoittaa, vaatesanojen sukupuoliwiittaukset voivat muuttua ja täten muuttaa koko määritelmän merkityksen.

Avainsanat: sosiaalinen sukupuoli, vaatteet, korpuslingvistiikka, leksikologia

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1. Introduction

Recent decades have seen an increased concern for more gender-neutral language use through women gaining a more equal status in the society, with more liberal attitudes towards sexuality and gender issues, and drag queen shows becoming mainstream entertainment and. This can be said of the Western world, at least. The changing cultural phenomena are bound to affect our language use as well, since we need appropriate words and terms to describe the changed attitudes. As pointed out by Norri (1998, 271), gender-referential shifts in language use do not only affect the nouns used of people, but also affect something that is daily very close to us, that is the clothes we wear and what names we use of different items of clothing. As Norri (*ibid.*) also states, this is clearly an understudied topic in linguistics and very little studies have been published relating to this topic to this day.

My study relates especially to linguistics and vocabulary studies. It is also linked to gendered language use and lexicography. I am interested to study if the gender-references of certain words for items of clothing have changed and how. I will use both dictionaries and corpora to study the intended wearers mentioned for some clothing items. I can then hopefully compare these findings with those made by Norri (1996, 1998), and see if corpus evidence, which includes written and spoken texts from a wider variety of text types, also supports Norri's findings, and most importantly, if there have been some changes in the gender-reference of the words studied by Norri twenty years ago.

Gender is one of the central concepts in this study. Coates (2004, 216) defines gender as “the term used to describe socially constructed categories based on sex”. Therefore, sex is a biological concept, whereas gender is a cultural, socially constructed, concept (ibid.). Similarly, Cameron and Kulick (2003, 1) note that this distinction between gender and sex is commonly accepted by scholars, at least within the fields of social sciences and humanities. Ehrlich and Meyerhoff (2014, 4) note the centrality of Judith Butler’s 1990 notion of gender as performative, and they state it being “the most significant” theory to influence the field of language and gender since the 1990’s. For Butler (2004, 1), gender is not stable, instead, it is redone, “an activity performed”. As Butler (ibid.) states, gender does not exist alone and it is not done for oneself alone, but “it is a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint.”

Coates (2004, 217) further notes, that the traditional binary distinction - male and female - of gender has been challenged by scholars. Instead of clear-cut categories which consist of homogenous members, there is rather a continuum of different femininities and masculinities (ibid., 217). However, as Coates (ibid., 217) states, “neither femininity nor masculinity can be understood on its own: the concepts are essentially relational”.

Curzan (2003, 26) states that “gender in the language reflects the social constructions of gender learned, maintained, and perpetuated by speakers”. Gender is not a completely stable phenomenon; instead it changes “through time, by context, and by speaker” (ibid.). Therefore, there must be some room for a change in what is seen as feminine or masculine clothing as well, which gives the motivation to conduct this study. Curzan (ibid.) talks of gender maintained through language by its speakers. I would think this also includes the words used for items of clothing, and the construction of the assumed gender of the wearer of each clothing item.

Although Coates (2004, 217) talks of gender as a plural concept, this study will need to simplify the concept of gender into male, female and neutral in the categories used for the classification of tokens and dictionary definitions. However, I do recognize the need to

acknowledge the plurality in terms of gender, and this study in itself works to reveal set ideas of what items of clothing are seen as fit for men and which for women, and how these perceptions are subject to change within time.

The aim of my study is to find out how gender-references of certain items of clothing may have changed from the studies conducted by Norri (1996, 1998), and to hopefully give some reasons for any possible changes. I will also expand the material collected with the help of different corpora, and study some additional words which were not included in the studies by Norri (*ibid.*). My research questions are the following:

- How and why the gender-references of the words for items of clothing have changed from Norri's (1996, 1998) studies?
- Are the five stages of gender-referential shifts distinguished by Norri (1998) also supported by corpus evidence from the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE)?
- Is the five stage model applicable to some other words for items of clothing?

I will use both quantitative and qualitative methods in my study, to reach both numeral results which will give an overview on the studied phenomenon, and qualitative observations which will come from a closer reading of each dictionary entry and corpus token, and the comparison of these.

As for the implications of this study, I hope that it will be relevant to the wider public, and especially to those people who are interested in gendered language use. There might also be implications for dictionary makers, in terms of taking gender into account more encompassingly and more consistently in dictionary entries. Additionally, future researchers could later on use this study as a basis to see if the gender-references of the words studied have changed further.

The four following sections discuss the theoretical background of my study, including gendered language use especially in relation to corpora and dictionaries. Additionally, Norri's study

of the five stages of gender-referential shifts and other previous studies related to clothing vocabulary from the gender perspective are discussed.

2. Gendered language use with focus on gendered vocabulary

In this section, I will discuss previous studies on gendered language use, especially those on gendered vocabulary. Focus on gendered language use has been brought forward largely by the feminist movement. The first-wave feminist movement took place in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, while second-wave feminism dates from 1960's to 1980's (Bucholtz 2014, 25). Bucholtz (ibid.) states that by the 1990's "language had become central to feminist theorizing ... also in the English-speaking world".

Similarly, Waksler (1995, 3) states that the feminist movement in the 1970's brought with it "[t]he modern lexical gender revolution", with new gender-neutral forms, such as *s/he* or *chairperson*, to be used instead of the male-assuming forms *he* and *chairman*, which were previously used to denote people who could be female as well. According to Waksler (ibid.), by the 1980's the awareness of gender-neutral language use had reached the main public, with words that were not marked for gender, e.g. *server*, being preferred over the gender-specific word pair *waiter / waitress*. Further, Waksler (ibid., 5) states that the 1990's continued the process of gender-neutralization in language, with examples of especially existing male forms becoming to be used more of females as well.

As Waksler above, Romaine (2001, 156-63) distinguishes the central parts of English where gender-indexing occurs: titles and forms of address, and andocentric generics. Bussmann and Hellinger (2002, 5-6) discuss gender across languages, and they consider "a gender language" to be a language that marks nouns with two or three genders (often masculine, feminine, and possibly neuter), which means that many Indo-European, but also Semitic languages fall into this group. However, as Bussman and Hellinger (ibid.) state, "lack of grammatical gender ... does not mean that

‘gender’ in the broader sense cannot be communicated”. English lacks this gendered noun classification, but as stated above, gender can be communicated in titles, forms of address, and personal pronouns, and of course through other lexical choices. Some languages, such as Finnish, have even less grammatical gender distinctions, since Finnish lacks the pronominal gender distinctions found in English pronouns (ibid., 10). The three-volume series *Gender across languages*, edited by Bussmann and Hellinger, clearly shows that gendered language use is a world-wide concern and a topic of study. As Romaine (2001, 155-6) states, English is very widely spoken worldwide, which “means that the issue of gender reform in English provides a potential model for users of other languages around the world.”

Curzan (2003, 133) discusses the history of words used to refer to males and females during the long history of the English language. Curzan (ibid.) states that, as is typical of open-class or content words, these words have been subject to much more semantic change than what is typical of pronouns. Further, Curzan (ibid.) notes that semantic shifts affecting the words used of males and females range from “shifting between positive and negative meanings to shifting genders altogether”. As Curzan (ibid., 139–140) states, especially the feminist studies of the past few decades have focused on the semantic pejoration of words denoting females and claim that words denoting females are subject to pejoration more often than those denoting males. However, as Curzan (ibid.) argues, the pattern is not as simplistic as often claimed, because “not all words for females undergo entirely negative developments, and words for boys are not exempt from pejoration”.

Romaine (2001, 156) states that in the feminist linguistic reform, “the primary strategy adopted by English-speaking feminists has focused on gender neutralization (degendering), while German and French reformers have more often campaigned for visibility through feminization”. Of course, German and French are both “gender languages”, and therefore the linguistic means for

feminist language reform are different than in English, where gender is not marked consistently in nouns.

Waksler (1995, 3–5) distinguishes four different types of gender-neutralization of the English lexicon in effect during the 1990's. The first type includes positive words denoting males becoming to be used of females in a positive sense (ibid.). Waksler (ibid.) gives *mensh* as an example of this type, since it first denoted a likeable man, but is now used of women as well. The second type distinguished by Waksler (ibid.), includes negative words used of females becoming to be used in referring to men with a positive effect. Waksler (ibid.) gives *bitch* as an example here, since it is a previously derogatory word used of women, but is now used especially among younger people to express in-group belonging. This type of development suggests that gender-neutralization can be accompanied by a loss of the earlier negative association of the word in question (ibid.). However, as Curzan (2003, 143) states, a word can “maintain both more neutral and more derogatory meanings simultaneously”, at least within a specific time frame and a speech community.

To continue with the types of gender-neutralization distinguished by Waksler (1995, 4–5), the third type is exemplified with *you guys*, which is used as a “gender-neutral term to address a group of either gender”. As Waksler (ibid.) states, *you guys* is used in many American English dialects to fill a semantic gap where a plural second person pronoun is needed. However, as Waksler (ibid.) states, once the semantic gap is filled, this type of gender-neutralization is not needed, which means that changes of this type are probably quite limited in number.

Whereas, the fourth type can be exemplified with abundance of cases where, “suffixed or compound terms that are lexically-marked for gender are becoming neutralized” (Waksler 1995, 5). Waksler (ibid.) gives examples of word pairs, such as *actor/actress* and *hero/heroine*, where the unsuffixed or male form is neutralized so that it can be used of both males and females. Waksler (ibid.) further points out that this change is different from that of the 1980's, when a completely new word, such as *server*, was used to replace a gendered pair, such as *waiter/waitress*. The change

happening during the 1990's is different in the sense that the feminine, often diminutive, forms of a pair are lost and the previously male form is neutralized (ibid.). This type of change is possible especially with male forms which are not "overtly morphologically marked as male", such as *actor*, *hero* or *comedian*, since e.g. the suffix *-or* is not used to denote maleness (ibid.).

Waksler distinguished above several different strategies of gender-neutralization. However, later studies, such as Baker (2010) which will be discussed in more detail in the following section, show how successfully these new formations have actually entered larger usage. Based on Baker's study (ibid.), especially British English seems to be somewhat reluctant to accept gender-motivated change in language.

Finally, this discussion on gendered language use leads us to thinking of how speakers actually decide to use forms that are non-sexist and include both genders? According to a study by Sczesny, Moser and Wood (2015), both deliberate and habitual processes are in action when speakers decide to use gender-inclusive language. That is, an individual's favourable attitude towards gender-inclusiveness attributed to the intention of using gender-inclusive language, which was also affected by the habit of using gender-inclusive language in the past (ibid., 951). Interestingly, also people who hold sexist beliefs make deliberate choices in **not** using gender-inclusive language (ibid., 951). As Sczesny et al. (ibid., 951) state, the participants "were essentially creating the gendered world that they endorsed in their ideological beliefs" in their texts.

The feminist language reform has reached certain goals, but the changes have also encountered resistance, such as the effort Cameron (2015) has noted in explaining how men and women are essentially different through popularized and distorted presentations of evolutionary psychology (EP). As Cameron (2015, 357) states:

We do not have perfect gender equality. But I think it is fair to say that educated men and women living in affluent societies today are less different from one another, and less constrained by their biology, than any group of men and women have ever been in human history.

The significance of that development is indicated by the backlash it has provoked. The currency of EP's meta-narrative, both among scientists and in popular culture, is one aspect of

this backlash: it says that whatever has changed, and however similar men and women might appear, at a deeper level the differences are still there, and always will be there. Whatever inequalities we see now ... are not the result of injustice, but simply the residue of natural difference.

After the general aspects of gender-motivated changes in language discussed above, two following sections will focus on gendered language use in more detail through previous studies on gendered language use in corpora and in dictionaries.

3. Gender in corpora

This section discusses previous, mostly diachronic, studies which utilize corpora in the study of gendered language use, focusing especially on vocabulary and some terms used in referring to males and females.

Sigley and Holmes (2002, 141) state that studies indicate changes in the gendered language use during the time period from 1960's to 1990's. The use of *woman* in writing is increasing, while there is a decline in the use of occupational terms ending in *-man/-men* (ibid.). Additionally, Sigley and Holmes (ibid., 143–4) studied the usage of *girl* and *boy* in three corpora: Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen (LOB), Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English (FLOB), and Wellington Corpus of New Zealand English (WWC), with LOB including British English from the 1960's, FLOB including the same variant from the 1990's, and WWC including New Zealand English from the late 1980's to 1990. They (ibid., 145) state that “the most striking fact when we compare the distribution of *boy* with that of *girl* is the massive gender asymmetry found in all three corpora”. In the corpora studied, *girl* is used three times more than *boy* in referring to adults (ibid., 145). Sigley and Holmes (ibid., 148–9) further discuss the usage of *woman* and *girl*:

In practice, then, both *girl* and *woman* are used to refer to young but sexually mature human females. The choice between *woman* and *girl* is therefore determined less by objective age than by a cluster of subjective connotations, including immaturity, innocence, youthful appearance, subordinate status, and financial or emotional dependence or vulnerability. Many of these can be seen as features traditionally attractive to men. Meanwhile, *girl* can also be used to invoke familiarity or solidarity (appropriately or inappropriately, depending on the

situation). Hence, attitudes to the term *girl* are ambivalent, and its semantic boundaries are a matter for continued social negotiation.

There being significantly more overlap in the usage of *woman* and *girl* than in the usage of *man* and *boy*, Sigley and Holmes (ibid., 149) consider that this indicates that the usage of *girl* when referring to adults is often sexist.

Similar to the findings on *girl* presented by Sigley and Holmes, are those made by Caldas-Coulthard and Moon (2010) when they studied the Bank of England corpus, which includes British tabloid and broadsheet newspapers. *Girl* was used around three times more in the tabloid *The Sun* than in the broadsheets included in the corpora (ibid., 118). As Sigley and Holmes (2002), discussed previously, Caldas-Coulthard and Moon (ibid., 119) also found that *girl* is used when referring to adult women:

Where specific ages are mentioned, *The Sun* has adult females up to 27, and the broadsheets up to 24, suggesting that girlhood is regarded as ending around the mid-twenties – perhaps along with the acquisition of a career, life partner and/or family; this also applies where age is mentioned in apposition after *girl*.

Therefore, *girl* is used of women well in their twenties, whereas with *boy*, when a specific age is mentioned, it is “usually under 18” (ibid, 122).

In addition to studying *girl* and *boy*, Caldas-Coulthard and Moon (2010, 124) studied the collocation of *man* and *woman*, and conclude their findings from the newspaper corpus as follows:

...women ... are far from being in powerful positions, since they are constantly judged in terms of social and aesthetic esteem, especially, but not exclusively, in the tabloid press. While men are evaluated in terms of their function and status in society, a woman is evaluated additionally in terms of her appearance and sexuality – even more so in the case of a young woman, whereas young men are evaluated in terms of their behaviour.

These findings once again show that women are valued more for their appearance, and desirability (as shown by Sigley and Holmes (2002) as well), whereas men are valued more through their actions and place in the society.

Again, similar findings are presented in a corpus study by Baker (2010). He studied corpora containing British English: three corpora from the Brown family (LOB with material from the

1970's, FLOB with material from the early 1990's, and a pre-LOB corpus with material from the 1930's, called BLOB), and a corpus he collected himself based on the Brown model, but containing online texts from 2006, referred to as BE06 (ibid., 129). Baker (ibid., 138) states that women are constantly referred to, in all the four corpora studied, in relation to desirability, with adjectives such as *beautiful*, *pretty*, and *desirable*. Interestingly, Baker (ibid., 138) states that the most recent corpus from 2006 shows evidence of men being referred to in terms of attractiveness and as looking after their appearance, with words such as *pretty*, *hunky*, *handsome*, and *fashion conscious* being used of men. However, in a diachronic view across all four corpora men are described as “physically strong and competent”, confirming the stereotypical way of seeing men (ibid., 138).

Additionally, Baker (2010) studied pronouns, some occupational and other terms referring to men and women in the four corpora mentioned above. There is a decline in the usage of all male pronouns (*he*, *his*, *him*) from 1960's onwards, while female pronouns show a slight increase, though the increase seems to be veining in the most recent data (ibid., 131-2). Baker (ibid., 133) also looked at the inclusive pronouns suggested to replace the male generics, such as *him or her*, *he or she*, and *s/he*. There is an increase in the usage until FLOB, but the increase is again veining in the 2006 corpus. Overall, the usage of these inclusive formations is very low, with only 14 tokens of *he or she* in FLOB, and seven tokens in BE06, therefore Baker suggests the usage “may even die out” (ibid., 133).

In relation to occupational terms, Baker (2010, 135) found that *policeman* was the most frequent term in referring to a police, until *police officer* replaces it as the most frequently used term in the 2006 corpus. Additionally, Baker (ibid., 134-7) looked at *spokesman* and *chairman* together with possible gender inclusive forms, such as *spokesperson* and *chairperson*. As Baker states (ibid., 134), there seems to be an increase in the use of *spokeswoman* and *spokesperson* since the 1991 corpus, but overall the frequencies are very low, and clearly the most popular form is still *spokesman*. Similar behaviour can be stated for *chairman*, but here the gap between the usage of

inclusive forms is even larger, with *chairman* being clearly the most frequent form, with only individual occurrences of *chairperson*, but with some more occurrences of simply *chair* in the 2006 material (ibid., 136). Overall, the frequencies of the *-person* suffix are quite marginal in all of the corpora, which Baker (ibid., 136) suggests might be due to the "resistance from some speakers as the suffix sounds earnestly and off-puttingly 'politically correct'".

Baker (2010, 145-6) summarizes his findings of language change induced by striving towards more gender-inclusive language as follows:

1. [P]eople seem to be more easily persuaded to stop using a sexist or biased term (such as *Mr*).
2. [I]f a new term must be used in place of an old one, then one which sounds naturalistic (such as *police officer*), and is based on existing words or word combinations (such as *chair*) is more likely to be successful.
3. [T]he invention of a completely new term (such as *Ms* or the *-person* suffix) is likely to be met with suspicion and resistance. Terms which are problematic to say (as opposed to write) such as *Ms* (which I have heard pronounced as /mɪz/, /mʊz/ or /mʊs/) or *s/he* are also unlikely to cross over into wider usage, particularly as written language seems to be (increasingly) influenced by spoken language.

As Baker states above, the path of least change seems to be the way for most speakers, it is easiest simply to stop using a sexist term, and if new additions to the language must be made, the most successful will most likely be those that rely on already existing language and are unproblematic to produce.

However, not all varieties of English behave similarly in accepting gender inclusive language reforms, and especially British English, studied by Baker above, seems to be on the conservative side. Sigley and Holmes (2002, 142) state that British English for example seems to be more conservative in accepting gender-motivated changes in language, at least when compared with New Zealand English. Similarly, Romaine (2001, 159) discusses "the lag" of British English in accepting *Ms* as a title in referring to all women, and states that one of the reasons "may be a more general concern with titles in a social system with a greater preoccupation with social status and correspondingly less social mobility". Additionally, Romaine (ibid.) notes that according to corpus evidence from the BNC, British English has more gender-specific titles (such as *manageress*) when

compared with American English in the Brown Corpus. Similarly, British English still retains *spinster*, when it is more archaic in American English and no tokens are found in the Brown Corpus (Romaine, *ibid.*).

Pearce (2008) studied gendered language using corpora through looking at the collocations of the lemmas MAN (including forms *man/men*) and WOMAN (including *woman/women*) in BNC. Pearce (*ibid.*, 2) notes that overall, BNC contains more than 1.5 times more occurrences of MAN than of WOMAN, which concurs with the masculine bias observed in other corpora as well. This raises an interesting question relating to the current study: Will there be more occurrences of male clothing than of female clothing in BNC, if this pattern applies to items of clothing in a similar manner?

In his study, Pearce (2008, 4–5) uses the Sketch Engine, which helps to build a more detailed analysis of a word's collocates, because it shows the collocates through three grammatical relations: if the lemma is a subject of a verb, an object of a verb, or modified by a preceding adjective. Overall, Pearce (*ibid.*, 19) concludes that based on BNC, MAN occurs more often as a subject with verbs of action which require strength, and similarly with adjectives depicting physical size and potency. WOMAN repeats the stereotypical notions of females by co-occurring with words related to emotional sensitiveness, such as *weep*, *cry*, and *hysterical* (*ibid.*). Similarly, the newspaper corpus studied by Caldas-Coulthard and Moon (2010, 117) indicates that *woman* collocates with stereotypical female emotional reactions, such as *distraught*, *suicidal* and *hysterical*. However, another type of behavioural words relating to women are positive words, such as *brave*, *strong*, *warm*, and *kindest*, which Caldas-Coulthard and Moon (*ibid.*) state to “suggest the idealized qualities of a mother figure”.

Additionally, women are more often presented as victims of violence, since women are more often the objects of verbs such as *rape* and *assault* (Pearce 2008, 19). However, as Pearce (*ibid.*, 21) notes, his study includes the BNC as a whole, when there might be differences in the collocational

patterns between different text types. Additionally, this analysis does not comment on how the words were used in the original texts, whether to actually impose stereotypical ideas of women, or to question them (ibid.).

4. Gender in dictionaries

Because the material used in this study includes dictionary definitions, some aspects of dictionaries and lexicography need to be discussed here. This section discusses dictionaries in terms of what is relevant from the viewpoint of gendered language use: especially definitions, usage labels and example sentences. Additionally, some previous studies discussing representations of gendered vocabulary in dictionaries are discussed.

Landau (2001, 157–163) states what he considers to be the most important rules of a good dictionary definition, in order of importance: avoid circularity, define every word used in a definition, and define the entry word. Circularity can happen when two words in a dictionary are defined using each other, exemplified by Landau as when *bobcat* is defined as *lynx*, and then *lynx* is defined as *bobcat* (ibid.). This type of defining would make it impossible for the reader to use the dictionary itself to look up a word they do not understand in the definition. Another type of circularity happens when a word is defined using the word itself in the definition, exemplified by Landau as defining *fear* as “the state of being fearful” (ibid.). In addition to avoiding circularity, Landau (ibid.) states that in a good definition, all the words used in it need to be defined in the same dictionary, so that the reader is always able to use the dictionary to understand any unclear part of a definition. Finally, Landau (ibid.) states that a good definition must define the entry word. This may seem self-evident, but it can be quite easy to lapse into describing the concept, without actually defining it. As Landau (ibid., 162) states, a definition “must answer the question, ‘what is it?’

directly and immediately”. If a definition does not meet this basic purpose, it has failed in giving the reader the information they need and are looking for in a dictionary (ibid.).

Additionally, example sentences are a critical part of a definition (Landau 2001, 207).

Examples can convey information about collocation, usage, connotation, grammatical context, and of the meaning itself (ibid., 208). As Simpson (2003, 268) notes, “the illustrative quotation supplements and enhances the definition”. The examples can be either invented by the dictionary makers or they can be examples of authentic occurrences of the word in usage, of which the latter is nowadays usually favoured (Landau 2001, 207; Simpson 2003, 269). However, both Landau (ibid., 208) and Simpson (2003, 269–272) state that invented examples have their place as well. As Landau (ibid., 234) notes, even inoffensive terms can occur in corpora in an environment which makes it impossible to use the example because it contains “disparaging or grossly insensitive comments about women or a minority group”. Landau (ibid., 234) states that this type of language cannot be used even within quotation marks, as it “would invite charges of bias and insensitivity from readers”.

In addition to definitions and example sentences, usage labels need to be considered when discussing gender in dictionaries. As Burkhanov (2003, 106) notes, there is no agreement on the number or exact content of usage labels. Landau (2001, 217–18) presents a list of the most common types of usage information (also presented in Burkhanov 2003, 105), including currency, regionality, specialized terminology, taboos, insult, slang, style or register, and status. These types are illustrated by typical usage labels, and *sexist* and *racist* are included under insulting usage (ibid.). *Sexist* is the only label referring to gendered language use in the usage labels presented in Landau’s (ibid.) list.

Interestingly, Norri (2000, 76-77) studied the labelling of derogatory words in British and American dictionaries and found that the *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English* (OALD) was the only one of the ten dictionaries studied that states to use *sexist* as a usage label. Of

the words studied by Norri, *OALD* used the label *sexist* in the entries for *chick* and *bird* (ibid., 88). Overall, the two learner's dictionaries (*OALD* and *Collins COBUILD English Dictionary*) were most diligent in labelling derogatory words, which Norri states as possibly coming from the aim to prevent students from using these words unintentionally (ibid., 91). *OALD* can be seen as progressive when compared with other dictionaries, and as Cowie (1995, 291) notes, a conscious editorial decision was made for the fourth (1989) edition of *OALD* to include more females in the dictionary overall, and "reflect present-day patterns of employment by featuring women in a wider range of professional roles".

Overall, fairly little seems to have been stated in relating to gender in the lexicographical works discussed above, and as Béjoint (2010, 213) notes, "[f]or a long time, women were badly treated in dictionaries". Similarly, Pauwels (1998, 206–7) states that dictionaries and other language reference works seem to be quite slow and sometimes even reluctant to accept changes initiating from feminist language planning. As Landau (2001, 424) argues, leaving out offensive examples provided by corpora "distorts an accurate expression of how real language is commonly used." Landau (ibid., 421–2) further states:

Every established dictionary reflects, however it may strive to be impartial, the prevailing biases of its times, because the biases often inhere in the very manner of expression used in its definitions. They inhere in the choice of terms to be included and in the fullness with which they are treated. Yet the indignation shown by some critics, who allege that the biases are either deliberate or the result of uncommon insensitivity, are almost always wrongheaded and unjustified.

Although Landau (ibid., 305) states many benefits of using corpora in making dictionaries, but as previous studies (e.g Pearce, 2008; Baker, 2010) show, corpora tend to have a masculine bias. Collecting a corpus is a time-consuming task and it always contains a language of the past, along with the biased structures reflected in the language. Therefore, inevitably dictionaries based on corpora reflect the biases of the society, as stated by Landau previously, although he seems to think not much can be done to this problem. However, in relation to expanding the usage of the IPA symbols in pronunciation information given in dictionaries, Landau (ibid., 124) states: "I do feel

that a dictionary has an obligation to enrich the understanding of the user when it is possible to do so without interfering with the basic purposes of the dictionary.” Could this “enrichment of understanding” also include awareness of gender-inclusive and non-sexist language use?

Hopefully, as Béjoint (2010, 214) states, dictionaries have become “more sensitive to gender in the course of the twentieth century, less prejudiced and less stereotypical”. Béjoint (*ibid.*) gives as one possible reason for this the fact that more and more women are included in the making of dictionaries. Although the progress may sometimes feel slow, it is still happening. When women are allowed to participate more and more in different fields of life and occupations, it will be self-evident to view things from the female perspective as well.

5. Clothing vocabulary from the gender perspective

This section focuses on gendered language use related to clothing and the importance of clothing in creating our explicit representation of gender.

5.1 Clothing as gender-specific cultural construct

Wearing clothes in public may seem self-evident, but why did people start to wear garments in the first place? Barnes and Eicher (1992, 1) state that “[t]extiles or skins as dress may be fundamentally protective, but they also have social meaning”. Dress acts as a sign of a person’s belonging to a group and it also indicates something of that person’s social and economic position in the society (*ibid.*). Additionally, Barnes and Eicher (*ibid.*, 2) state that “[g]ender distinctions are a crucial part of the construction of dress”.

Eicher and Roach-Higgins (1992, 17–19) further discuss the definition of dress and state that each society, or a sub-group, sets its own guidelines as to which parts of dress, also including body modifications, are effective in declaring gender roles. It can be a very little thing, such as a ribbon tied to a baby’s hair, which declares a female identity, or, similarly, a short haircut can denote a

male identity (ibid.). These perceptions of what is accepted as masculine or feminine, are additionally affected by the wearer's age and other social factors:

[D]ress functions as a powerful though often underestimated system of visual communication that expresses gender role, which is usually intertwined with age, kinship, occupational, and other social roles throughout a person's life (ibid., 23).

As Cameron and Kulick (2003, 5-6) state, biological sex, gender and sexuality are "interconnected" in the daily lives of people. They (ibid.) note that "deviant" sexuality, such as homosexuality, is often seen as "*gender* deviance"[emphasis original], not simply as a different sexuality, which shows the interconnectedness of gender and sexuality. As Cameron and Kulick (ibid., 6) note, "[c]onversely, straight people who flout gender norms are routinely suspected of being homosexual." Therefore, as clothing is an important factor in creating gender distinctions, as noted by scholars discussed above, it can also be read as a sign of sexuality. Further, defying the norms of gender appropriate dress of one's culture can lead to other members seeing that in relation to a differing sexuality.

Similarly, Laver (1982, 7) states that the two most central and popular distinctions in costumes that have been made throughout the millennia of the history of dress, are the distinction between male and female clothes, and the distinction between fitted and draped clothes. However, if there is a long history of differentiating between male and female dress, these distinctions have not stayed the same throughout the history. As Laver (ibid.) notes, men have not always worn trousers and women skirts, instead skirts or skirt-like garments have belonged to the wardrobes of many men, including the Scots, and vice versa, for example Far Eastern women have worn trouser-like garments.

Additionally, Lurie (1981, 213–14) discusses the importance garments have in distinguishing gender. She (ibid.) states that garments have an important function in promoting "erotic activity", and even goes as far as to state that the clearer and more absolute the distinction of dress between the sexes is, the higher the birth rate. Lurie (ibid.) gives our times as an example of a time when

many clothing items are unisex and at the same time, birth rates are lower. This seems quite an extreme statement, given that other scholars emphasize how clothing expresses a multitude of social factors, to say nothing of how lower birth rates are probably affected by multiple factors, such as the modern possibility for birth control. Additionally, Lurie cites no sources for her statement.

In addition to the cultural factors related to gendered dress discussed above, the distinction between genders in dress can also be looked at from a commercial point of view. Benwell and Stokoe (2006, 165) discuss “commodified identities”, which include aspects of constructing an identity through commercial processes, such as consumer identities, building an identity through consumption and commercials, and representing identities in commercial contexts, e.g. “consumer femininity”. As Benwell and Stokoe (*ibid.*, 171) note, the gender distinctions constructed through clothing and other means constitute an enormous market:

The constructed differentiation between masculinity and femininity as identity categories is significantly supported and perpetuated by the production and consumption of gendered products (clothes, fragrance, make-up, gadgets). In turn, gender identity – and femininity historically more so than masculinity – is the commercial *raison d’être* of a huge sector of the market, governing and directing the terms of consumption.

Therefore, there is a monetary benefit for many parties in promoting gender distinctions in clothing, and in creating certain types consumer and fashion identities for both women and men.

The previous sections included discussion on the changing gendered language of especially the recent decades, however, changes in the gender-reference of clothing items have also happened before the large-scale trend of the gender-neutral usage that started in the 1970’s. Norri’s (1998) stages of gender-referential shifts are discussed in more detail in the following subsection.

5.2 Five stages of gender-referential shifts

Norri (1998) studied changes that have happened in the gender association of certain words, and based on this evidence, he discerns five stages of gender-referential shifts. His study is based on entries from eight English dictionaries and a corpus that includes British newspapers from the years

1992–94 (ibid., 272). Most of the words studied are words for items of clothing, but the words studied by Norri also include names, such as *Leslie*, and the expression *to have balls*, which can indeed be used of women as well (ibid.).

Norri (1998) presents five stages of gender-referential shifts in English in his article:

- 1) Sporadic occurrences of extended gender association
- 2) The extended gender association begins to spread
- 3) Parity (i.e. neither female nor male referents dominate)
- 4) The more recent gender association prevails
- 5) The original gender association is totally forgotten

The first stage includes words that have a clear gender association, but the main association can be contradicted occasionally in texts just for the effect of surprise, etc. (ibid., 273). Norri (ibid., 273) gives *bloomers* as an example, for they are historically clearly women's clothing, but the newspaper corpus presents some tokens of *bloomers* being used when referring to male underwear. However, the key here is that the main usage is clearly of the female clothing and other types of occurrences are more an evidence of creative language use than an actual change happening in the broader usage of the word. Other examples given of words in this stage are *Y-fronts* and *French knickers* (ibid., 274).

The second stage presented by Norri (1998, 276–278), includes words where the more recent gender association is used more often than can be said of the first stage. *Undies* are given as one example, while most of the dictionaries studied state that they are underwear worn (especially) by women, while two dictionaries studied do not state anything of the gender of the wearer (ibid.). The newspaper corpus also suggests that *undies* can be used of underwear worn by men as well, with around 30 percent of tokens denoting male wearers (ibid.). Other words given from this stage are *long johns* and *swimsuit* (ibid.).

The following stage, third stage, presented by Norri (1998, 278–280) is parity, where the word in question can be used quite neutrally with association to either male or female referents. *Jacket* was in the Middle English period used of a garment for men, when it can now be used of women's clothing as well (ibid.). Other example words given from this stage are *trench coat*, *pants* and *briefs* (ibid.).

The fourth stage distinguished by Norri (1998, 281–283), includes words where the more recent gender association begins to take over from the previous usage. *Blouse* is given as an example, for it was first recorded in usage referring to “the well-known blue blouse of the French workman...” in the early 19th century, but already towards the end of the same century, *blouse* was used to denote a garment for girls or women (ibid.).

The fifth and last stage distinguished by Norri (1998, 284–285), is when the original gender association of the word is completely forgotten. *Petticoat* is given as an example, since it was used in the Middle English period of “man's tight-fitting short coat”, but the usage started to shift towards female underwear during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in today's usage the original association to men's wear seems to have been completely forgotten (ibid.).

5.3 Other previous studies on clothing vocabulary

Beside the studies by Norri, the gendered aspect of vocabulary when it comes to clothing seems not to have been in the focus of the academic world. However, some studies can be found, but most often they have a narrower focus on only one or some clothing items, and none discuss the gender aspect of clothing vocabulary in as much detail as Norri does.

Dovey (1987, 169) discusses clothing vocabulary from the aspect of word borrowings between English and French, and describes the habit as follows:

The adoption of more elegant or ‘chic’ names from across the Channel is one of the features of the clothing vocabulary of both French and English. It is more likely with a new or newly fashionable garment, it has been going on for centuries and it shows no sign of slackening. It

often involves some change in the word or in its meaning or application in the country of adoption.

According to Dovey (ibid., 172), some clothing words have even crossed the Channel twice. *Panty* in French is a “returned loan”, because it was loaned from English *pants* and *panties*, which are again abbreviations of the French loan *pantalon* ‘trousers’ (ibid., 172).

Similarly, Foster (1968, 135) mentions American *suit* as replacing the feminine *costume*. Along with *blouse* first being male clothing, and *knickers* being shortened from male *knickerbockers*, Foster (ibid.) wonders “what envies and unfulfilled longings cause women to steal men’s clothes”. Even though Foster was afraid for his clothes, Norri’s (1998) more recent study, discussed in the previous section, shows that it is not only a case of women “stealing” men’s clothes, but an opposite development is just as well possible.

To continue with other previous studies, many studies relating to gendered language use and items of clothing seem to focus on only one or a few clothing items, such as Makoni’s (2011) study using critical discourse analysis to describe how discussions about miniskirts are used to control women, or Fields’ (2002) study of the discussion of female sexuality and modesty through the study of open and closed drawers in the USA from 1800 to 1930. Similarly, Mas (2017) focuses on the creation of the reform dress (a costume for women that consists of loose trousers and a skirt) in the 19th century America.

Additionally, Bucholtz (2008) studied the attitudes young people have towards clothing and what kind of messages they send and receive through clothing in “Shop Talk: Branding, consumption, and gender in American middle-class youth interaction”. One of the interesting findings is that clothing is important in marking the group that young people belong to. One group mentioned by Bucholtz is called “pretty-boy”, which for its members means a high interest in fashion and especially in certain brands, but this high interest in fashion and clothing is not seen as overtly feminine (ibid., 380–381). Further, Paoletti (2012) focuses on the gendered aspects of children’s clothing in her book *Pink and Blue: Telling the Boys from the Girls in America*. Overall,

it would seem that the gendered aspects related to clothing have been studied somewhat more in America and especially through the lens of critical discourse analysis, which is used by both Bucholtz (2008) and Makoni (2011).

When compared to the studies mentioned above, somewhat more closely related to vocabulary is Arnold's (2010) study of the gender dynamic in Fair Isle knitwear. The term Fair Isle –knitting can be used of any knitting work that creates patterns with colours, or more restrictively it is used when referring to the specific patterns used in Fair Isle. According to Arnold (2010, 89-91), originally *shawls*, usually a knitted triangular scarf worn on the shoulders, were worn by women, and men could wear a fisherman's *gansey*, a knitted sweater, often decorated with the Fair Isle colour work. As pointed out by Arnold (*ibid.*, 88, 92), the Fair Isle knitwear is, at least in the context of Western male wear, very colourful and decorative but still considered very appropriate male wear, as demonstrated by HRH the Prince of Wales, pictured wearing a Fair Isle knit, c. 1925. The greatest fashion booms for Fair Isle knitwear were experienced in the 1920's and 1970's (*ibid.*, 88). A new word in referring to these knits was introduced according to Arnold (*ibid.*, 91) in 1920, when the Fair Isle knits were first advertised under the name *jumper* and were not specifically advertised for either gender. Overall, the Fair Isle jumpers have reached both male and female use and can now be called a gender-neutral garment, for very little changes (neckline, colouring), or no changes at all are applied to jumpers due to the designated wearer, male or female (*ibid.*, 88, 96).

6. Conducting the study

The following section discusses the methods and material used to reach answers to the following research questions:

- How and why the gender-references of the words for items of clothing have changed from Norri's (1996, 1998) studies?

- Are the five stages of gender-referential shifts distinguished by Norri (1998) also supported by corpus evidence from the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE)?
- Is the five stage model applicable to some other words for items of clothing?

6.1 Methods

The methods used in this study combine both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods are used to reach numeral results which will give an overview of the studied phenomenon, and qualitative observations will rise from a closer reading of each dictionary entry and corpus token, and the comparison of these.

6.1.1 Studying the dictionaries

The first stage of the study is to look at the entries of the clothing words studied in the selected dictionaries. I will classify the definitions according to the possible intended wearer given in the definition, whether it is either *male*, *female*, *both (m/f)* or *neutral*. Both men and boys are included under the *male* category, and similarly, women and girls are included in the *female* category. The category *both* includes definitions where both genders are mentioned as intended wearers, or, the intended wearer is formulated so that it can include both genders, such as with the word *children*. Finally, if nothing of the gender of the intended wearer is explicitly mentioned in the definition, it is classified it as *neutral*. This classification results in numeral results and in qualitative results though a closer reading of each definition.

For the most part, the classification of the dictionary entries was quite straightforward. Most often the definitions mention the intended gender of the wearer quite clearly, however, sometimes the gender is expressed in the manner such as *especially* female, or *originally* male. Specifications

of this kind are noted in the analysis and presented in the table that concludes the dictionary findings in Section 7.1.

A type of defining that proved to be somewhat difficult to classify, was when the gender of the wearer was not explicitly mentioned, but it could be seen as implied in the definition. This happened especially when another clothing word was used in the definition of the word in question, e.g. when *long johns* are defined as *underpants*, which are further most often defined as male clothing. This is exemplified with the definition given by *Oxford Dictionaries (OD)*:

OD s.v. long johns: informal underpants with closely fitted legs that extend to the wearer's ankles.

In cases such as above, I decided to classify the definition as *neutral*, because it does not explicitly mention the gender of the intended wearer. However, I discuss the implied gender of the definition in the analysis, because this type of defining is not fully gender-neutral. In some definitions, if a clothing word was used in the definition the intended gender was made explicit, such as in the example below from *The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus (CALD)*, which I classified as *female*:

CALD s.v French knickers: noun (plural), loose knickers (= women's underwear) with wide legs

Additionally, in some definitions the gender of the intended wearer constructed by the definition does not match with the example sentences given in conjunction with the definition. Sometimes a definition can be gender-neutral, but then only one example sentence is given, and it features only a female wearer of the garment. In this type of cases, I made the classification based on the definition itself, and then made a note of the possibly different gender constructed by the example sentence(s). What needs to be noted, I only included the example sentences in the analysis when there was only one or two example sentences, which were most likely selected and edited by the dictionary makers to act in enhancing the definition. This needs to be noted because online dictionaries are no longer limited by space and can include multiple examples of usage from the

corpus used in the dictionary construction. Both of the *Collins* dictionaries studied note on their online site that the example sentences are automatically selected, and with *OD*, the example sentences need to be clicked open if one wishes to see them. These types of example sentences are not included in the study, because usage examples are not in the main focus in this study.

6.1.2 Studying the corpora

The second stage of the study includes similar word searches in the selected corpora, BNC and GloWbE. I included the plurals and possible different spellings of each word, such as *swimsuit* and *swim suit*. Full information on the different forms included in the searches can be found in Appendix 2. I did not include *-ed* forms, such as *bloused*, because an experimental search showed that these forms are quite rare and are often used in a sense that does not refer to an actual item of clothing and its wearer, but instead is used in more generalized manner, as in “all jacketed people are...”. Most importantly, including all possible endings of a word and conducting a search such as *blouse** would have reduced the precision of the searches.

Conducting corpus searches is always a matter of finding a balance between precision and recall, i.e. how large portion of the relevant tokens is found with a search. For the most part, precision, i.e. the portion of relevant tokens of all the tokens obtained with a search, was rather good. With some words, such as *pants*, which are often used figuratively, the precision was not as good, but it would have been quite difficult to improve it using corpus methods. I had to read through each token and decide if it was used figuratively or in referring to an actual item of clothing, which any corpus tool cannot really do. I did not include idiomatic and figurative usage, such as *pants* in the meaning of ‘inferior’, or phrases such as *catch somebody with their pants down*, *scare the pants off somebody*, *flying by the seat of their pants*, etc, where the usage is not really referring to an actual pair of pants being worn. Additionally, I did not include very specific or

untypical types of clothing where, for example, the wearer is not really making a choice of wearing such clothes, such as *life jacket* and *straight jacket* in the search results for *jacket*.

If the search for a word resulted in more than 1,000 hits, I thinned the results randomly down to 1,000, simply to make it possible to manually categorize each token. Of the words studied, this was the case with *jacket* in both corpora. Additionally, with GloWbE, the searches for *pants*, *jumper*, and *knickers* were thinned to 1,000 hits. Of these 1,000 hits, not all were relevant to the study. The final relevant frequencies of each word studied can be seen in Appendix 2. For the most part, each word had several hundreds of tokens, but some rarer words, such as *French knickers* and *tangas* resulted in less than ten tokens.

After conducting the searches, I analysed the corpus findings, i.e. read through each token in its context and classified the token according to the intended wearer into either *male*, *female*, *neutral* or *unclear*. The classification into these categories happened under the same principles as discussed above with the dictionary entries, *male* includes men and boys, whereas *female* includes women and girls. Under *neutral*, I classified tokens where the gender is not known (such as when the wearer is *baby*, *I*, *they*, *kids*, etc.) and the context does not give any clue of the gender of the wearer. Additionally, *neutral* includes the quite rare cases of tokens where both genders are mentioned, such as “Maria had her dad’s woolly jumper on”, because I counted these as in a way cancelling out each other. The *unclear* category includes unclear cases, usually when there is not enough context even to decide for certain if the token is relevant to the study. This happened most often with spoken material from the BNC, and other very informal language, such as blog comments in GloWbE.

To make the categorization, I had to rely on my cultural knowledge of what are typical male and female names, and on other similar cultural clues. However, if I was unsure, or the wearer had a name that could be either gender, I rather classified the token as *neutral*. What needs also to be noted, is that I made the classifications based on the information provided in context with each

token. Especially with the blog material provided in GloWbE, the gender of the writer is usually known and can be seen in the pictures most likely provided in the blog, but those visual materials were not available to me during the analysis. Although GloWbE contains links to the material sources, a large number of the links do not work anymore. Many blog texts are written from the I perspective, which means that I am unable to classify the tokens other than *neutral*, unless the text itself gives clues of the gender of the writer. This further leads to the fact that the proportion of *neutral* tokens is larger than it would have been if I had had the visual information available to me in addition to the written text.

After conducting these two stages of the analysis, it will be possible to compare my results with those reached by Norri. My aim is to find out if the model of the five stages of gender-referential shifts (Norri, 1998) is also supported by corpus evidence, which includes material from a wider variety of text types and also more recent material. Additionally, I aim to find out if some clothing words which were not included in Norri's study can be placed in one of the five stages of gender-referential shifts.

6.2 Material

The material for this study focuses on British English, as in Norri's studies (1996, 1998), so that it would be possible to compare the results.

6.2.1 Words to be studied

For this study, I have decided to include all the clothing words studied by Norri (1998), so that I would be able to make some comparisons with Norri's results and the corpus evidence. The words studied by Norri (1998) are: (given with their stage of gender-reference)

- 1) Sporadic occurrences of extended gender association: *bloomers*, *French knickers*, *Y-fronts*
- 2) The extended gender association begins to spread: *swimsuit*, *undies*, *long johns*

- 3) Parity (i.e. neither female nor male referents dominate): *blazer, jacket, trench coat, pants, briefs*
- 4) The more recent gender association prevails: *blouse*
- 5) The original gender association is totally forgotten: *petticoat*

In addition to these words, I will also include *knickers*, because it was more frequent than *French knickers* in the newspaper corpus studied by Norri (1996, 100). I am also interested to see if corpus evidence supports Arnold's (2010) claim that *shawls* are worn by women, *guernseys* by men, and *jumpers* are gender-neutral. This is why I will also include *shawl, gansey/guernsey* and *jumper* in my words to be studied. I have also decided to include *leggings*, because they have become recently quite popular with women and girls. Even though *high-heeled shoes* are perhaps more an accessory than a clothing item, I am interested to see if *high-heeled shoes* are only presented as women's accessory in the dictionaries and in the corpora. Finally, I will include *tanga(s)*, which was included in Norri's (1996) study. This selection gives me in total 21 words of items of clothing to study.

6.2.2 Dictionaries

I will use the online versions of the following dictionaries, selecting the British English -versions where the selection is offered: *The Collins English Dictionary* (hereafter *CED*), *The Collins COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary* (*CCE*), *The Chambers Dictionary* (*ChD*), *The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online* (*LDCE*), *Oxford Dictionaries* (*OD*), *The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus* (*CALD*) and *The Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*). This selection includes dictionaries that correspond to the dictionaries studied by Norri (1998) when possible, again so that it would be possible to compare the results. The dictionaries also include both learners' and advanced dictionaries, so that it might be possible to make some comparisons between the different types of dictionaries. I will use online dictionaries because of the ease of access, and because the online version will most likely be the most recent one.

6.2.3 Corpora

I will use two corpora to study the words mentioned above. Norri's (1996, 1998) studies were limited to British English, therefore I will use the same limitation in the choice of corpora as well, so that I can compare my results with those reached by Norri. I will use the British National Corpus (BNC) through *BNCweb*, and the Corpus of Global Web-Based English (GloWbE), where I will only look at the GB-section.

The BNC is a 100 million word corpus which contains texts from a wide variety of sources, including newspapers, academic and fictional texts (Burnard 2009). It includes a written part (90%) and a spoken part (10%) (ibid.). The BNC was built between the years 1991 and 1994 (ibid.). Therefore, the BNC is approximately from the same time period as the newspaper corpus used in Norri's (1998, 272) study, but it includes a wider variety of text types and it also includes spoken material.

In order to obtain more recent material, I have also decided to use the GloWbE. The information given on the corpus site states that GloWbE contains in total 1.9 billion words, which were collected from 340,000 websites in 20 English-speaking countries. Of this, the section of texts from Great Britain is 387,615,074 words in total, which makes it the largest section in the corpora. GloWbE was compiled in 2012. For my study, this means that GloWbE has quite recent material, but the drawback is of course that the corpus is limited to texts that are available online. A large portion of the texts comes from blogs, but GloWbE includes material from all kinds of online sites, including the online sites of newspapers, ranging from *The Guardian* to *Daily Mail*. Additionally, GloWbE contains duplicates due to the fact that the material comes from online sources and the same material may have been linked to in several places. The constructors of GloWbE have tried to remove duplicates, and I tried to remove all the duplicates I noticed during the analysis process, but some may still have remained.

7. Analysis and results

This section presents the results of my study, first from the dictionaries and then from the corpora.

7.1 Dictionaries

First, I present my findings on how dictionaries present (or do not present) the gender of the designated wearer in their definitions of the 21 clothing words studied, as shown in Table 1 (below).

TABLE 1. All studied words for clothing items and the gender of the intended wearer in the dictionary definitions. Abbreviations used in the table are the following:

m = men or boys, **f** = women or girls, **n** = neutral (no gender mentioned), **m/f** = both genders mentioned, **-** = no entry, **esp.** = especially, **1.** = 1st sense, etc., **orig.** = originally.

	<i>CED</i>	<i>CCE</i>	<i>ChD</i>	<i>LDCE</i>	<i>OD</i>	<i>CALD</i>	<i>OED</i>
<i>blazer</i>	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
<i>bloomers</i>	1. f / 2. f / 3. n	f	f	f	f	f	f
<i>blouse</i>	1. f / 2. n / 3. m	f	1. f / 2. m	f	1. f / 1.1n / 1.2 m	f	1.m / 3.f
<i>briefs</i>	m / f	-	-	m / f	n	m / f	n
<i>French knickers</i>	f	-	n	-	n	f	f
<i>gansey</i>	n	-	n	-	n	orig. m	n ¹
<i>guernsey</i>	m	-	orig. m	-	orig. m	orig. m	m ¹
<i>high-heeled shoes</i>	n	f	-	f	f	f	-
<i>jacket</i>	n	n	n	n ²	n ²	n	1a. m / 1c. f
<i>jumper</i>	n	n ³	n	n	1.n / 2.m	n	1.n / m / 3. n
<i>knickers</i>	f	f	f	f	f	f	f / n
<i>leggings</i>	1. n / 2. f / n	1. f / 2. n	1. f / 2. n	1. f / 2. n	1. f / 2. n	f	1. n / 3a. n / 3b. esp. f
<i>long johns</i>	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
<i>pants</i>	n	n	n	n	n	n	m / f
<i>petticoat</i>	f	n	1. f / 2. n / m	f	f	n	1a. m / 2. f
<i>shawl</i>	f / n	f / n	n	esp. f	f / n	esp. f	f / n
<i>swimsuit</i>	f	esp. f	n	n	f	n	f / n
<i>tanga(s)</i>	n	-	m / f	-	n	-	m / f
<i>trench coat</i>	n	n	n	n	n	n	1.m / 2.n
<i>undies</i>	esp. f	f	esp. f	n	esp. f	n	f
<i>Y-fronts</i>	m	m	m	m	m	m	m

1 Example sentences given are neutral or feature men as the designated wearers of *gansey* and *guernsey*.

2 Example sentences given for *jacket* are neutral or feature men as designated wearers.

3 Example sentence for *jumper* features a woman, Isabel, as the designated wearer.

Full definitions, including the different numbered senses of each word can be seen in Appendix 1.

7.1.1 Words with a very clear gender association

When looking at the above table in more detail, the only item all of the dictionaries state unanimously to be worn by men (or boys) are *Y-fronts*. Whereas with female clothes, all dictionaries agree that *bloomers* and *knickers* are worn by women or girls. Clothing items where the gender of the designated wearer is mentioned by none of the dictionaries (i.e. gender-neutral words) are *blazer*, *long johns* and *trench coat*, with the exception of one the senses given by *OED* being male. With *briefs*, *jacket*, *pants* and *tanga(s)*, some dictionaries describe the items gender-neutrally and the rest mention both males and females as designated wearers in their definitions.

Of the words for clothing items studied, as defined by the seven dictionaries studied, where the designated wearer is female or the gender of the wearer is not mentioned, are: *French knickers*, *high-heeled shoes*, *leggings*, *shawl*, *swimsuit*, and *undies*. Whereas clothing items where the designated wearer mentioned in the definition is male or the gender of the wearer is not specified, are: *gansey*, *guernsey* and *jumper*.

When these results are compared with the ones reached by Norri (1996, 1998) regarding dictionary definitions, even after twenty years, many things have stayed the same. Norri (1996, 68–71) studied seven dictionaries and found out, just as here, that words for clothing items described as being for men were *Y-fronts*, *boxer shorts* and *boxers*. Similarly, clothing items described as being for women both in this study and in Norri's (ibid.) study are *bloomers* and *knickers*.

It would seem that these words, which have a very clear gender association, are not very likely to change their gender reference, at least not without some new usage of the word taking over. *Bloomers* are even historically designated for women and *Y-fronts* have their name from the inverted Y-shaped seam on the front that is caused by the seam structure which allows more space for the male anatomy. It would not be very easy for these words to start to change their gender

associations. Norri (1998, 274) gives examples from newspapers where *Y-fronts* are described as designer clothes for women as well, but it would seem that these occasional fashions have not affected the definitions of *Y-fronts*, at least not in the dictionaries studied here. *Bloomers* and *Y-fronts* are also given as examples of the first stage of gender-associative change (Norri 1998, 273 – 274), with only sporadic occurrences of extended gender association, and it would seem that for these words, their respective stages have not changed.

7.1.2 Words moving towards more gender-neutral usage

However, Norri (1998, 274) suggests that *French knickers*, which is listed in his article to be in the first stage, might be changing towards a more gender-neutral usage. This is somewhat supported by my findings, with three of the dictionaries defining French knickers as female clothing and two of them, *ChD* and *OD*, gender-neutrally (see Table 1). The word was not included in two of the dictionaries studied.

ChD s.v *French knickers*: plural noun, a type of wide-legged knickers, normally made from silk or a silky material.

OD s.v *French knickers*: plural noun Loose-fitting, wide-legged knickers, typically of silk or satin.

CALD s.v *French knickers*: noun (plural), loose knickers (= women's underwear) with wide legs

As can be seen from the definitions above, *French knickers* are defined either as women's underwear or without mentioning the gender of the designated wearer. However, in *ChD* and *OD* the designated gender of the wearer can be seen as implied, since they are defined as *knickers*, which are defined as female clothing by all of the dictionaries studied. However, the emphasis of these definitions is more on the material and the fit of the garment. It could be that *French knickers* are in the process of becoming unisex, as is suggested by Norri (1998, 274).

Another word that is stated by Norri (1998, 276) to be moving towards a more gender-neutral usage is *swimsuit*. In all of the dictionaries studied by Norri (ibid.), *swimsuit* is defined as being used by women, or especially by women. In the dictionaries studied here, approximately half define *swimsuit* as worn by women, and the other half gender-neutrally, both possibilities illustrated by examples below.

ChD s.v. *swimsuit*: noun, a garment worn for swimming.

OD s.v. *swimsuit*: noun, a woman's one-piece swimming costume.

Since many of the dictionaries studied here still define *swimsuit* as being worn by women, it has not yet become a fully gender-neutral term. However, *swimsuit* might well be in the process of becoming gender-neutral, since it is more often defined gender-neutrally than in Norri's study.

Similarly, *long johns* is stated to be in the second stage of Norri's (1998, 278) stages of gender-associative change, with some dictionaries defining it to be worn by males and most defining it gender-neutrally. Of the dictionaries studied here, all defined *long johns* without explicitly mentioning the gender of the wearer, as can be seen from the examples below.

OD s.v. *long johns*: *informal* underpants with closely fitted legs that extend to the wearer's ankles.

CALD s.v. *long johns*: underwear with long legs, worn under your outer clothes to keep you warm

However, *long johns* are defined as *underpants* by four of the dictionaries studied. *Underpants* are usually seen as worn by men, as can be seen from an example definition below.

ChD s.v. *underpants*: plural noun, a man's undergarment covering the body from the waist or hips to (especially the tops of) the thighs.

Whereas two of the dictionaries studied define *long johns* as underwear, which can denote the underwear worn by either gender, as illustrated by the definition below.

ChD s.v. *underwear*: noun. clothes, eg bras, pants, etc, worn under shirts, trousers, dresses and skirts, etc, and usually next to the skin.

Of the dictionaries studied, *OED* defines *long johns* using both of the words, *underpants* and *underwear*, discussed above. It would seem that long johns are moving from Norri's (1998) second stage to the third stage, where neither male nor female referents dominate as the intended wearer.

7.1.3 Gender-neutral words which have kept their neutrality

Many words have kept their stage, when compared with Norri's (1998, 278–280) words given as examples of the third stage, where neither male nor female referents can be said to dominate as the intended wearers. Norri (*ibid.*) gives *blazer*, *jacket*, *trench coat*, *pants* and *briefs* as examples of the third stage. All of these words are defined in the dictionaries studied here similarly either gender-neutrally or with both males and females given as the intended wearers. An example of giving both men and women as the intended wearers can be cited here:

CED s.v. *briefs*: plural noun, men's underpants or women's pants without legs

For comparison, an example of a gender-neutral definition can be cited here as well:

CED s.v. *trench coat*: noun, a belted double-breasted waterproof coat of gabardine, etc, resembling a military officer's coat

Based on these findings, many of the clothing items which have been applied to both male and female wearers seem to have kept their status in Norri's (1998) third stage, where neither male nor female referents dominate.

7.1.4 Words from stages four and five

In Norri's (1998) study, *blouse* is placed in stage four, where the more recent gender association is beginning to take over, and *petticoat* is in the fifth stage, where the original gender association is completely forgotten. Both of these words seem to have kept their respective stages according to the dictionaries studied here. In three of the dictionaries studied, *blouse* is only defined as female garment, which is the more recent usage of the word. The rest of the dictionaries mention the male

usage of the garment and especially usage by soldiers. *ChD* includes both of these usages, as can be seen from the definition below:

ChD s.v. *blouse*: noun **1** a woman's garment very similar to a shirt. **2** (*also* **battle-blouse** and **battle-dress blouse**) *especially formerly* a loose jacket belted or gathered in at the waist, forming part of a soldier's or airman's uniform.

As can be seen in the definition, the female usage is given as the first sense, and the male usage is the second sense given. Therefore, *blouse* seems to be still in the fourth stage, since the more recent usage of the word as a women's garment is taking over, but it has not yet entirely replaced the original meaning, since the earlier usage of male, especially soldiers', clothing is still mentioned in several dictionaries.

Similarly, *petticoat* seems to have kept its place in the fifth stage, where the more recent gender association has taken over and the original gender association is forgotten. Norri (1998, 285) places *petticoat* in the fifth stage, because it used to denote a fitted coat for men in the Middle English period, but the word then started to shift towards female wearers during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and now only denotes a garment for female wearers. The dictionaries studied here seem to agree, with a majority defining *petticoat* as a female garment. Of course *OED* notes the historical usage, but otherwise *ChD* is the only dictionary to mention the historical usage of the word as other than female clothing.

ChD s.v. *petticoat*: noun **1** a woman's underskirt. **2** (**petticoats**) *historical* skirts in general, or those worn by boys in early childhood in particular

OD s.v. *petticoat*: noun A woman's light, loose undergarment hanging from the shoulders or the waist, worn under a skirt or dress.

Since the clear majority of dictionaries do not include the original male wearers of *petticoat*, it can be said that the more recent gender association has clearly taken over.

7.1.5 Words not included in previous studies by Norri

As for the words which were not included in previous studies by Norri, *high-heeled shoes* were defined by four of these dictionaries as women's shoes and in one of them gender-neutrally, while two of the dictionaries studied did not include the word. Examples of both types of definitions are given below.

CED s.v. *high-heeled shoes*: noun, shoes having high, rather than flat, heels

CCE s.v. *high-heeled*: adjective, high-heeled shoes are women's shoes that have high heels.

CALD s.v. *high heeles*: noun, plural, women's shoes in which the heels are raised high off the ground

It has to be said that none of the dictionaries cited above have very successful definitions, for perhaps the concept is so self-evident that it is difficult to describe in another words. However, it is interesting that *CED* defines *high-heeled shoes* gender-neutrally, when the COBUILD-version targeted for learners from the same dictionary-family, *CCE*, defines them to be worn by women. Perhaps for learners it is easier to recognize clothing words when they are connected to the most stereotypical wearer, but the definition in itself is not very successful since it is a circular one.

I included in my study also the words for knitted garments mentioned in Arnold's (2010) study: *shawl*, *jumper* and *gansey*, including the more standard spelling of *gansey*: *guernsey*, to see if the gender associations mentioned by Arnold would be visible in the dictionaries studied as well. According to Arnold (2010, 89–91), *shawls* are in the Fair Isles women's garments, *ganseys* are for seafaring men, and *jumper* is the newest word that designates a gender-neutral knitted garment for the upper body. In the dictionaries studied here, *shawl* is defined as being worn by women or especially women in most of the dictionaries, with one dictionary (*ChD*) defining it gender-neutrally.

LDCE, s.v. *shawl*: [countable] a piece of cloth, in a square or triangular shape, that is worn around the shoulders or head, especially by women

ChD, s.v. *shawl*: noun, a large single piece of fabric used to cover the head or shoulders or to wrap a baby.

Whereas for *gansey* and *guernsey*, both of them are only included in five of the seven dictionaries studied, with *gansey* being more often defined gender-neutrally than *guernsey*. This would suggest that these are not as clearly male clothing as is stated by Arnold (2010). However, it may just be that the dialectal subtleties have been lost in the dictionaries. *OED* does not mention gender in the definition of *gansey*, but four out of five of the usage examples given feature males as the designated wearers of *ganseys*.

OED, s.v. *gansey*: Dial. variant of Guernsey n. 2a; a jersey. ...

1969 J. Wood *Three Blind Mice* vi. 82 Who ever went tae sea in those latitudes without his sea-boots and a decent ganzie on his back?

Jumper is given by Arnold (ibid.) as the later, gender-neutral version of *gansey*, which is supported by the definitions found in the dictionaries studied, since all of them define *jumper* either gender-neutrally or worn by both males and females.

CALD, s.v. *jumper*: noun, UK, a piece of clothing with long sleeves that is usually made from wool, is worn on the upper part of the body and does not open at the front: a red woolly jumper

Interestingly, *CCE* defines *jumper* gender-neutrally but then only gives an example sentence with a female designated wearer:

CCE, s.v. *jumper*: A jumper is a warm knitted piece of clothing which covers the upper part of your body and your arms. (British) *Isabel had on a simple jumper and skirt.*

This type of definition can be confusing, when the definition itself does not mention the gender of the user, but can it be then deduced from the example sentence? As discussed previously, example sentences can add essential information to the definition itself, as stated by Simpson (2003, 268): “the illustrative quotation supplements and enhances the definition”. A clearer style would be to follow the gender-neutral style in the example sentences as well, or to give examples of both genders as the designated wearers of the clothing item in question.

Finally, I will discuss another new word, *leggings*, which was not included in the previous studies by Norri. Most of the dictionaries studied give two slightly different senses for the word, as illustrated by the following example.

ChD, s.v. *leggings* plural noun

1 close-fitting stretch coverings for the legs, worn by girls and women.

2 *formerly* outer and extra protective coverings for the lower legs.

Similarly, *OED* gives the oldest sense of leggings as a type of extra protective coverings for the legs, with the earliest examples of usage from the 18th century.

OED, s.v. *legging* 1. Chiefly in *pl.* a. Each of a pair of coverings for the legs, or the lower part of the legs from the ankle to the knee, typically of leather or cloth; (sometimes) spec. each of a pair of strong additional coverings used to give extra protection to the legs in bad weather or rough conditions. Chiefly N. Amer. in early use.

A newer usage of the word is a tight-fitting garment, worn by either children or women.

OED, s.v. *legging* In *pl.*

3a. Any of various close-fitting garments for the legs, resembling trousers or tights, and worn esp. by children. See also sense 3b.

3b. spec. Tight-fitting trousers made of a stretch fabric, worn esp. by women and girls.

The earliest usage examples of the sense 3a are from the 19th century, whereas the earliest example of the usage 3b is from the 1970's. Therefore, it seems that the earliest usage of *leggings* is a protective garment which is usually defined gender-neutrally, although many of the examples given in *OED* feature men as the designated wearers of this protective clothing. Later on, the meaning of *leggings* has widened into denoting tight-fitting coverings for the legs, and most recently, especially tight-fitting trousers worn especially by women or girls.

To conclude the findings from the seven dictionaries studied, it would seem that many of the words for items of clothing have kept their stage when compared with the previous studies by Norri. However, if there is any change, it is most often towards a more gender-neutral definition, as was the case with *long johns*, *swimsuit*, and *French knickers*. *Long johns* seem to be moving from a garment only meant for men, towards a garment that can be worn by either gender as an undergarment that protects from the cold. Whereas *swimsuit* and *French knickers* are originally seen

as women's clothing, but could now be in the process of becoming unisex. However, *leggings* are the exception to the rule here. *Leggings* have an earlier usage of usually gender-neutrally defined protective coverings for the legs, though they were probably most often used by men. A more recent sense of the word denotes tight-fitting trousers especially for women and children. Therefore, *leggings* seem to be moving from a neutral, or masculine, garment towards especially female usage.

Additionally, it is interesting to see that this sample includes both originally male and female clothing words which are moving towards usage that allows both genders as wearers. Whereas, when Norri (1998, 281-285) gives examples of words in stages four and five, where the more recent gender association prevails or has completely taken over, the examples are *blouse* and *petticoat*, which were both initially male clothes and where the more recent association to women's clothing has taken over. Therefore, it cannot be stated which way (from male to female, or the other way round) would be the typical one when the gender-references of words for items of clothing shift.

7.2 Corpora

The following section presents the results of my study from the two corpora studied, BNC and GloWbE. Citations from the BNC are identified with the text identifier (three letters) followed by the sentence number, citations from GloWbE with a link to main site, and sentence number.

7.2.1 Words with a very clear gender association

As already noted with the dictionary definitions, some words have a very clear gender association, which is not likely to change very easily. Below (Tables 2 and 3) are presented the results of the classification of the words *bloomers*, *knickers*, and *Y-fronts*. The leftmost frequency (freq) column shows the raw frequency of each word. After that, the tables include the raw frequencies, percentages counted from the raw frequencies, and normalized frequencies (per 1,000,000 words)

for each category. I counted the normalized frequencies so that it would be possible to compare the frequencies between the corpora that are of different sizes, GloWbE being much larger. *Male* includes men and boys, *female* women and girls, *neutral* includes tokens where the gender is not mentioned and cannot be deduced from the context, and finally, *unclear* includes all unclear tokens which could not be categorized.

TABLE 2. Frequencies of *bloomers*, *knickers*, and *Y-fronts* in BNC. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages, and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

BNC	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>bloomers</i>	29	2	7	0.02	17	59	0.17	8	28	0.08	2	6	0.02
<i>knickers</i>	316	8	2	0.08	154	49	1.57	145	46	1.48	9	3	0.09
<i>Y-fronts</i>	14	7	50	0.07	0	0	0	7	50	0.07	0	0	0

TABLE 3. Frequencies of *bloomers*, *knickers*, and *Y-fronts* in GloWbE. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

GloWbE	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>bloomers</i>	45	0	0	0	18	40	0.05	22	49	0.06	5	11	0.01
<i>knickers</i>	796*	24	3	0.06	334	42	0.86	419	53	1.08	19	2	0.05
<i>Y-fronts</i>	58	26	45	0.07	0	0	0	31	53	0.08	1	2	0.002

* Frequency includes the relevant tokens of randomly selected 1,000 hits

As can be seen in Tables 2 and 3, both *bloomers* and *Y-fronts* have retained their very clear gender association also shown in the dictionaries studied in the previous section, and in the previous study by Norri (1998). *Bloomers* have very little or no tokens of male usage. Similarly, *Y-fronts* are only worn by men according to both corpora, since neither BNC nor GloWbE have any examples of females as intended wearers of *Y-fronts*. The following is the only example of a woman wearing *Y-fronts*, which I have classified as *neutral* since both genders are mentioned.

(1) And er Thing is she's wearing his *y-fronts* ... (BNC, spoken, KDA 19)

Even here, it can be seen that it is unusual for a woman to be wearing *Y-fronts* since the speaker mentions that they are actually male clothing and belong to a male wearer.

When it comes to *knickers*, female usage again clearly dominates, although there are some cases where the gender of the wearer is male, but these constitute only 2% of all usage in BNC, and 3% in GloWbE. The proportion of *neutral* usage is rather large, but it at least partly comes from not being able to deduce the gender from the context (with wearers such as *I, they...*), as already discussed in the methods section.

7.2.2 Words moving towards more gender-neutral usage

As already discussed with the dictionary definitions, Norri (1998, 274) suggests that *French knickers* might be moving from the first stage towards unisex usage. This was somewhat supported by the dictionaries, with the emphasis of the definitions being on the fit and the material of the garments, not only on the gender of the wearer. However, as shown in Table 4 and Table 5 below, most of the usage in both corpora is female, with no male wearers. Additionally, it needs to be noted that both of the corpora studied include only a very small number of tokens for *French knickers*.

TABLE 4. Frequencies of *French knickers*, *long johns*, *swimsuit*, and *undies* in BNC. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

BNC	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>French knickers</i>	8	0	0	0	6	75	0.06	2	25	0.02	0	0	0
<i>long johns</i>	35	4	11	0.04	1	3	0.01	30	86	0.31	0	0	0
<i>swimsuit</i>	127	1	1	0.01	68	54	0.69	57	45	0.58	1	1	0.01
<i>undies</i>	36	6	16	0.06	14	39	0.14	16	45	0.16	0	0	0

TABLE 5. Frequencies of *French knickers*, *long johns*, *swimsuit*, and *undies* in GloWbE. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

GloWbE	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>French knickers</i>	10	0	0	0	6	60	0.02	4	40	0.01	0	0	0
<i>long johns</i>	46	9	20	0.02	2	4	0.01	35	76	0.09	0	0	0
<i>swimsuit</i>	349	6	2	0.02	92	26	0.24	249	71	0.64	2	1	0.01
<i>undies</i>	187	24	13	0.06	33	18	0.09	127	68	0.33	3	1	0.01

More examples of clothing words moving towards more gender-neutral usage are *long johns*, *swimsuit*, and *undies*. All three words are placed in the second stage (the extended gender association begins to spread) in Norri's (1998, 276) study. Norri (ibid., 278) quotes examples of *long johns* being worn by women both as overwear and underwear. However, in the material from BNC and GloWbE, most of the usage seems to be of wearing *long johns* as underwear, since layering of clothes, cold climates and especially in GloWbE, *thermal long johns* are often mentioned. However, as shown in Tables 4 and 5, there are some tokens of *long johns* worn by women. Additionally, tokens where *long johns* are meant for both genders, are also found, as below:

- (2) ... round neck, long sleeve top and *long johns*, women's and men's designs available.
(BNC, written, CHJ 13)

Therefore, based on the corpus material studied here, it would seem that *long johns* are still more male clothing than female clothing, however, there is consistently neutral and female usage as well. Female usage of slim and elastic trousers as overwear may be covered by *leggings*, which could explain why similar usage of *long johns* as overwear reported by Norri (ibid., 278) was not so much found in this material. However, the number of tokens overall is fairly low, which also needs to be noted.

When it comes to *swimsuit*, the newspaper corpus studied by Norri (1998, 276) suggests that *swimsuit* appears to be expanding from female garment to “any type of swimming apparel, whether worn by women or men”. Similar development can be seen as continuing in the corpora studied here, as is shown in Tables 4 and 5. Women (26% in GloWbE) are still wearing *swimsuits* more than men (2%), but the *neutral* category covers 71% of the tokens. Interestingly, from BNC to GloWbE, the percentage of women as wearing *swimsuits* has decreased, when the male and neutral usage has increased. As already stated by Norri (ibid.), *swimsuit* can be used of swimming garments for either gender. It seems to be that *swimsuit* is also used of the engineered swimming apparel targeted for competitive swimming. This usage was apparent in the tokens from GloWbE, although a large portion of this usage came from one blog source, however, it was not the only source to speak of competitive swimming suits for either gender as *swimsuits*, as exemplified below.

(3) ...set a new world record for the 200m individual medley last July since performance-enhancing *swimsuits* were banned... (GloWbE, telegraph.co.uk, 74)

(4) Can the swimsuits of 2012 beat the polyurethane *swimsuits* of 2009? (GloWbE, engineeringsport.co.uk, 225)

Based on the corpus evidence, it would seem that *swimsuit* is indeed moving towards unisex usage, although the female usage is still clearly more frequent than male usage, therefore it perhaps cannot yet be stated that it would have reached the third stage. However, if similar development continues *swimsuit* may well reach the third stage distinguished by Norri (1998), where neither male nor female referents dominate.

One more clothing word moving towards more gender-neutral usage discussed here is *undies*. As can be seen in Tables 4 and 5, *undies* seem to be going through similar development towards more unisex usage as *swimsuit* discussed above. Male and neutral usage is on the rise, while at the same time the number of females wearing *undies* is on the decline. Of the material from GloWbE, only 18% of the tokens are females as designated wearers of *undies*, although of course the neutral

category contains some female wearers which I have not been able to classify as female. However, men seem to be just as comfortable in undies, as shown by the examples below.

(5) ...he's on so many billboards in his *undies*, but he's got this broad Essex accent. (GloWbE, thisisleicestershire.co.uk, 49)

(6) ... that a mere bird (or a guy with a bomb in his *undies*) can bring a jet to the ground. (GloWbE, allword-news.co.uk, 154)

Undies broadening its usage towards unisex clothing is especially interesting because the diminutive *-ie* ending is usually typical of women's clothing, such as *nightie*, *undies* and *combies*, as is noted by Norri (1998, 277).

7.2.3 Gender-neutral words which have kept their neutrality

These five words: *blazer*, *jacket*, *trench coat*, *pants* and *briefs* are all in the third stage, where neither male nor female referents dominate, in Norri's (1998) study. As can be seen in Tables 6 and 7 (below), this is mostly the case in the corpora studied here as well, since *neutral* is the largest category for all of these words in GloWbE. With BNC, *neutral* is the largest category for *jacket*, *pants* and *trench coat*.

TABLE 6. Frequencies of *blazer*, *briefs*, *jacket*, *pants*, and *trench coat* in BNC. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

BNC	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>blazer</i>	158	88	56	0.90	16	10	0.16	53	34	0.54	1	0	0.01
<i>briefs</i>	41	10	24	0.10	23	56	0.23	7	17	0.07	1	3	0.01
<i>jacket</i>	881*	360	41	3.66	125	14	1.27	389	44	3.96	7	1	0.07
<i>pants</i>	368	90	24	0.92	81	22	0.82	191	52	1.94	6	2	0.06
<i>trench coat</i>	76	33	43	0.34	7	9	0.07	35	46	0.36	1	1	0.01

* Frequency includes the relevant tokens of randomly selected 1,000 hits

TABLE 7. Frequencies of *blazer*, *briefs*, *jacket*, *pants*, and *trench coat* in GloWbE. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

GloWbE	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>blazer</i>	601	126	21	0.33	36	6	0.09	417	69	1.08	22	4	0.06
<i>briefs</i>	143	32	22	0.08	17	12	0.04	82	58	0.21	12	8	0.03
<i>jacket</i>	902*	174	19	0.45	76	8	0.20	636	71	1.64	16	2	0.04
<i>pants</i>	646*	160	25	0.41	84	13	0.22	362	56	0.93	40	6	0.10
<i>trench coat</i>	133	39	29	0.1	14	11	0.04	77	58	0.20	3	2	0.01

* Frequency includes the relevant tokens of randomly selected 1,000 hits

Interestingly in BNC, female wearers cover 56% of all the wearers of *briefs*. However, the overall frequency of the word in BNC is fairly low (n=41), so individual texts, such as one that seems to be an advertisement for women's underwear, can affect the percentages quite drastically. Whereas in the 143 tokens from GloWbE, the usage of *briefs* is mostly neutral (58% of all tokens), while males (22%) and females (12%) have clearly smaller portions of the usage of *briefs*.

Another interesting finding with these words is that although these garments can just as well be worn by women or men, as is also shown by the dictionary definitions discussed in the previous section, the percentage of male referents in these corpus findings is for most of the words somewhat higher than of female referents. Especially in the BNC; male wearers cover 56% of the wearers of *blazer*, while female wearers only cover 10%. However, the differences between male and female usage are less prominent in GloWbE, but they are still there. In GloWbE, male wearers cover 21% of the wearers of *blazer* while females cover 6%. This higher frequency of male wearers is probably at least partly explained by the male bias reported in BNC and other corpora in previous studies (e.g Pearce, 2008; Baker, 2010). As stated, the gap between men and women seems to be lessening when we come from the British English of the 1990's covered in the BNC to early 2010's covered in GloWbE. As previously discussed by Cameron (2015, 357): "educated men and women living in

affluent societies today are less different from one another...”. Women are more active participants in the society and in the working life, which will of course also increase the need for women to have and wear appropriate clothing for work, such as *blazers* for the office, and other work environments.

7.2.4 Words from stages four and five

In Norri’s (1998) study, *blouse* is placed in stage four, where the more recent gender association is taking over, and *petticoat* is in the fifth stage, where the original gender association is completely forgotten. These findings were also supported by the dictionary definitions studied here, and similarly by the corpora studied, as can be seen in Tables 8 and 9 below.

TABLE 8. Frequencies of *blouse* and *petticoat* in BNC. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

BNC	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>blouse</i>	565	14	2	0.14	370	65	3.76	178	32	1.81	3	1	0.03
<i>petticoat</i>	127	2	2	0.02	68	53	0.69	54	43	0.55	3	2	0.03

TABLE 9. Frequencies of *blouse* and *petticoat* in GloWbE. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

GloWbE	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>blouse</i>	707	22	3	0.06	269	38	0.69	409	58	1.06	7	1	0.02
<i>petticoat</i>	137	2	1	0.01	50	37	0.13	71	52	0.18	14	10	0.04

Blouse is in both corpora very rarely worn by men, as is shown by the low percentages of male wearers: 2% in BNC and 3% in GloWbE. At least a part of the male wearers of blouse are explained by the older usage of the word as a soldier’s garment, as in the examples below.

(7) After a quick wash and shave, dressed in a freshly pressed kilt and battledress *blouse*, polished boots and all, I presented myself with the other Commandos at the orderly room... (BNC, written, A61 9)

(8) Sergeant Murray wears a khaki felted wool *blouse* with three stripes. On his shoulder is the Highland Division patch... (GloWbE, rememberingscotlandatwar.org.uk, 238)

Completely other kind of men wearing *blouses* are the rock stars, such as Steven Tyler and Freddie Mercury, included wearing *blouses* in the material in GloWbE. The first example comes from a site where the URL (online address) includes Aerosmith, therefore I deduced that Tyler in the token refers to the lead singer Steven Tyler. Similarly for the second example, the URL includes Freddie Mercury's full name.

(9) In bell-bottoms and a preposterous puffed *blouse*, no one could mistake Tyler for anything but a rock star. He's... (GloWbE, telegraph.co.uk, 173)

(10) Freddie's wearing tight oyster-grey satin pants, an antique market cream satin *blouse* and a scarlet velvet Victorian bed jacket. His hair is cormorant-black... (GloWbE, guardian.co.uk, 394)

Additionally, men wearing *blouses* can be associated to other untypical choices in the appearance of men, such as wearing make-up:

(11) ...as a teenager he wore make-up, spent hours on his hair, and wore *blouses*. (GloWbE, thisisyesterday.com, 305)

However, these examples show that most of the male wearers of *blouse* are in connection with historical clothing, or, in the case of modern men, somehow in a different position that allows men to dress more flamboyantly, such as the rock stars mentioned. Clearly, the female wearers of *blouse* have taken over, and for the women *blouse* is not as marked item of clothing as it is for men.

When looking at the corpus findings for *petticoat*, it seems that the female usage has taken over even more completely, since men only cover 2% of the usage in BNC, and 1% in GloWbE. Each corpus only includes two tokens of male wearers of *petticoat*, therefore it seems safe to say that the corpus evidence studied here supports Norri's (1998) results of *petticoat* being in the fifth stage of gender-associative change where the original gender association is completely forgotten.

7.2.5 Words not included in previous studies by Norri

Next, clothing words which were not included in the previous studies by Norri, are discussed.

Arnold (2010) studied Fair Isle knitwear and states that *shawls* are worn by women, *guernseys* traditionally by seafaring men (with the alternative spelling *gansey*), and *jumper*s are gender-neutral. As can be seen in Tables 10 and 11 (below), this is mostly supported by the corpus evidence as well. However, the number of tokens for *guernsey* and *gansey* is very low in both corpora studied.

TABLE 10. Frequencies of *gansey*, *guernsey*, *jumper*, and *shawl* in BNC. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

BNC	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>gansey</i>	1	1	100	0.01	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>guernsey</i>	16	10	63	0.10	4	25	0.04	2	12	0.02	0	0	0
<i>jumper</i>	543	103	19	1.05	100	18	1.02	325	60	3.31	15	3	0.15
<i>shawl</i>	278	5	2	0.05	152	55	1.55	120	43	1.22	1	0	0.01

TABLE 11. Frequencies of *gansey*, *guernsey*, *jumper*, and *shawl* in GloWbE. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

GloWbE	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	freq	freq	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>gansey</i>	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	75	0.007	1	25	0.002
<i>guernsey</i>	7	0	0	0	1	14	0.002	6	86	0.02	0	0	0
<i>jumper</i>	718*	91	13	0.23	63	9	0.16	531	74	1.37	33	4	0.09
<i>shawl</i>	363	26	7	0.07	117	32	0.30	215	59	0.55	5	1	0.02

* Frequency includes the relevant tokens of randomly selected 1,000 hits

In terms of *jumper*, both corpora have clearly most of *neutral* usage, with 60% for BNC and 74% for GloWbE. Male wearers are again slightly more frequent than female wearers in both corpora, but, it is probably again at least partly explained by the male bias typical in corpora.

Shawls are mainly neutral or female garments, however, there are also male wearers in the corpora studied. In GloWbE, male wearers cover 7% of the usage of *shawl*. However, the male wearers in GloWbE seem to be mostly of quite a different cultural origin than the Fair Isle knitted shawls. Men are especially mentioned as wearers of *shawls* in association to the Asia and Middle East, and Jewish prayer shawls are mentioned in some tokens, as exemplified below:

(12) ...thirty-two-year-old Rabbi Shalom Kantor, is standing off to the side, removing his prayer *shawl* and phylacteries. (GloWbE, books-express.co.uk, 126)

Overall, the corpus evidence studied here does mostly agree with Arnold's claim that *jumper*s are neutral and *shawls* worn by women, however, the neutral and male usage of *shawl* may be on the rise as is suggested by the evidence from GloWbE. However, the corpus evidence of *guernsey* (and *gansey*) is so little that I do not dare to make any statements based on that, but especially in BNC it still is mainly worn by men while some tokens of female usage are also included.

Two more words studied which were not included in the previous studies by Norri are *high-heeled shoes* and *leggings*. As seen in Tables 12 and 13 (below), *high-heeled shoes* are in both corpora mainly worn by women, with male usage covering only 4% in BNC and 2% in GloWbE of the whole usage. However, the overall frequency is rather low, only around 50 tokens for each corpus.

TABLE 12. Frequencies of *high-heeled shoes*, and *leggings* in BNC. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

BNC	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	fre q	fre q	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>high-heeled shoes</i>	49	2	4	0.02	34	69	0.35	13	27	0.13	0	0	0
<i>leggings</i>	175	31	18	0.32	40	23	0.41	102	58	1.04	2	1	0.02

TABLE 13. Frequencies of *high-heeled shoes*, and *leggings* in GloWbE. Each section shows raw frequencies (freq), percentages (%), and normalized frequencies (nf) per 1,000,000 words.

GloWbE	Male				Female			Neutral			Unclear		
	fre q	fre q	M %	M nf	freq	F %	F nf	freq	N %	N nf	freq	U %	U nf
<i>high-heeled shoes</i>	54	1	2	0.002	16	30	0.04	37	68	0.10	0	0	0
<i>leggings</i>	535	19	4	0.05	127	24	0.33	387	72	1.0	2	0	0.005

Looking at *leggings* in more detail, neutral and female wearers are more frequent than male wearers in both corpora, especially in GloWbE, as shown in Tables 12 and 13. As already discussed in Section 7.1 with the dictionary findings, *leggings* have an earlier meaning as protective coverings for the legs, or only for the lower part of the legs. This type of garment was most often worn by men, or is defined gender-neutrally by the dictionaries studied, whereas the newer usage of *leggings* as tightly fitting trousers made from stretch fabric and worn especially by women seems to be taking over. The men wearing *leggings* in the corpora studied is partly explained by the more historical usage of *leggings*, and they are mentioned as worn when riding a horse and as *military leggings*. Even GloWbE includes some historic sites or news discussing historical clothing, such as the example below that discusses an archaeological find:

(13) ...was named after the Otz Valley in which he was found, still wearing goatskin *leggings* and a cape made from woven grass... (GloWbE, telegraph.co.uk/news, 147)

This example comes from a news article discussing Ötzi the Iceman, found in the 1990's after being preserved in the ice for around 5,000 years.

However, the more recent female usage of leggings seems to be taking over, and women wearing leggings as trousers is often discussed especially in the material in GloWbE, and not always in a positive sense, as exemplified below by a comment to an article in *Daily Mail*:

(14) When will girls realize *leggings* are not pants? And oh we don't wan to see your midriff? (GloWbE, dailymail.co.uk, 50)

In the above example, *pants* seem to be used in referring to trousers. Recent fashions have favoured *leggings*, and the popularity of *leggings* is probably also explained by the comfort of the stretch material which makes them easy and comfortable to wear.

8. Discussion

The following subsections discuss the findings of the study by bringing the findings from the dictionaries and corpora together and linking the current findings to previous studies. Additionally, possible suggestions for further studies are discussed.

8.1 Discussion of findings

This section discusses the most important findings from the dictionaries and corpora studied, especially in terms of how the research questions are answered. The aim of this study was to find out how the gender-references of certain items of clothing may have changed from the studies conducted by Norri (1996, 1998), and to hopefully give some reasons for the possible changes. Another aim was to expand the material collected with the help of different corpora, including BNC and GloWbE, and to study some additional clothing words which were not included in the previous studies by Norri to see if these words can be placed in the five stages of gender-referential shifts presented by Norri (1998).

Even though there are twenty years between the studies conducted by Norri and this study, no dramatic changes in the gender-reference of the clothing items studied have happened, however, some interesting findings are made and there are indications of some words continuing to shift towards neutral usage, whereas *leggings* seem to be shifting from male wearers towards female wearers. After all, it needs to be noted that it can take even several centuries for a word to go through several of the stages of gender-referential shifts, such as with *petticoat*, which started as a

male garment in the Middle English period, but started to shift towards female wearers already during the Middle English period, continued that change during the 16th and 17th centuries and is now used only in denoting female garments (Norri 1998, 285).

8.1.1 The five stages in relation to corpus material from BNC

One of my aims was to find out if the corpus material studied here also supports the stages distinguished by Norri (1998). Norri's (ibid., 272) study is based on eight dictionaries and a newspaper corpus which includes British newspapers dating from the years 1992–94. Similarly, BNC was constructed between the years 1991 and 1994, but includes a far wider variety of text types and also spoken material, which makes it a valuable material for this study even though it is already dated from today's viewpoint. However, it is best to compare the results reached by Norri in the analysis of the newspaper corpus to those from the BNC, because they include material mainly from the same time period. Both the findings from Norri's (1998) study and the findings made from the BNC in this study can then be used to make comparisons between the more recent corpus material from GloWbE and the dictionary definitions collected for this study.

When comparing the results from BNC to the results presented by Norri (1998), the words studied can be placed in the same stage of gender-referential shifts as in Norri's study. However, based on the material from BNC, especially some of the words in the first stage (*French knickers*, *Y-fronts*) and second stage (*swimsuit*, *undies*, *long johns*) are not yet quite as clearly starting to shift towards more gender-neutral usage as in the newspaper corpus studied by Norri. This may be due to the perhaps more innovative language use of the media.

Norri (1998, 274) found tokens of men wearing *French knickers* in the newspaper corpus, and suggests that they are "possibly in the process of becoming unisex". This is not supported by the corpus evidence from BNC, because there are no tokens found of men wearing *French knickers*, however, there were only eight tokens in total of the word in BNC. Similarly, the newspaper

corpus studied by Norri (ibid., 274) contained tokens of *Y-fronts* designed for women by Chanel. All the dictionaries studied by Norri (ibid., 274) defined *Y-fronts* as male garment and it was therefore placed in the first stage. As Norri (ibid., 274) notes, it is “impossible to say whether French knickers for males and/or Y-fronts for females will prove to be more than an ephemeral craze”. Placing *Y-fronts* and *French knickers* in the first stage proved to be a wise choice, since there are no tokens of *Y-fronts* for women or *French knickers* for men in BNC, nor in GloWbE.

To continue with words from stage two, where we can see some shifting of gender in the material from BNC as well. Of *swimsuit*, only one token with a male wearer was found in BNC, but neutral wearers constitute 45% (n=57) of all wearers. However, female wearers are the most common group, constituting 54% (n=68) of wearers. In Norri’s (1998, 277) newspaper corpus, seven tokens of men or boys as wearers of *swimsuit* were found.

Similarly, *long johns* can be placed in the second stage based also on the corpus evidence from BNC, with male wearers only covering 11% (n=4) of all wearers, and neutral wearers covering 86% (n=30). However, the overall number of tokens (n=35) of *long johns* is fairly low, and some of the tokens categorized neutral are somewhat borderline cases between neutral and male. In the BNC, only one token of a woman wearing *long johns* was found, whereas in Norri’s newspaper corpus there were 13. *Undies* likewise shows a shift away from the original gender association of female underwear, but here BNC too shows already slightly more shifting than with *long johns* and *swimsuit*. Of the 36 tokens found in BNC, male wearers cover 16% (n=6) of the wearers of *undies*, while females cover 39% (n=14), and neutral tokens cover 45% (n=16).

When it comes to words from the third stage, where neither male nor female referents dominate, Norri’s (1998) study places *blazer*, *briefs*, *jacket*, *pants*, and *trench coat* in this stage. This is largely supported by the corpus evidence from BNC, where neutral is the largest group for all the words, except for *blazer* and *briefs*, and neither male nor female wearers seem to dominate in such a manner that the smaller group would have only individual tokens as in the first or second

stage. However, for *briefs*, female wearers constitute 56% (=23), male wearers 24% (n=10), and neutral wearers 17% (n=7) of the 41 tokens found in BNC. In the newspaper corpus studied by Norri (ibid., 279), there were more tokens of male wearers of *briefs* than of female wearers, which indicates a much clearer shift from original female gender-reference than in BNC. However, the overall number of tokens in BNC is fairly low and female wearers do not clearly dominate, even though they are in the majority. Later on, in the material from GloWbE, female wearers only make 12% of the wearers of *briefs*. When it comes to *blazer*, male wearers cover 56% (n=88) of the wearers, whereas female wearers only cover 10% (n=16). Similarly, the percentage of male wearers is higher than female wearers for all of the words in the third stage, except for *briefs*. As already discussed previously, this can be at least partly explained by the male bias discovered in corpora (e.g. Pearce, 2008; Baker, 2010). Pearce (2008, 2) studied BNC and discovered that BNC contains more than 1.5 times more of the occurrences of MAN than of WOMAN.

To continue with further stages of gender-referential shifts, Norri (1998, 281–2) gives *blouse* as an example of the fourth stage, where the more recent gender association prevails. This is also supported by the corpus evidence from BNC, where the more recent gender association as a female garment covers 65% (n=370) of the wearers of *blouse*, whereas the male wearers only cover 2% (n=14), and neutral wearers cover 32% (n=178). However, the original association has not yet completely disappeared from usage.

The fifth and last stage of gender-referential shifts distinguished by Norri (1998, 284–5) is when the original gender association is completely forgotten. This stage includes *petticoat* (ibid.). The nonexistence of male wearers of *petticoat* is mainly supported by the corpus evidence from BNC, since there are only two tokens of males wearing a petticoat, one being a male baby and another being a grown male who is mentioned as “discarding his drag” later on (BNC, written, G1X 113).

8.1.2 Words continuing to shift towards more gender-neutral usage

One of the aims of this study was to find out how the gender-references of certain items of clothing may have changed from the studies conducted by Norri (1996, 1998). As already discussed previously, most of the words studied have retained their respective stages, but there are some interesting developments, and some of the words are continuing to shift towards gender-neutral usage as observed in Norri's (1998) study.

In Norri's (1998, 276–8) study, *long johns* are in the second stage, where the extended gender association begins to spread. Figure 1 (below) shows the gender-references of *long johns* in the dictionaries and corpora studied here.

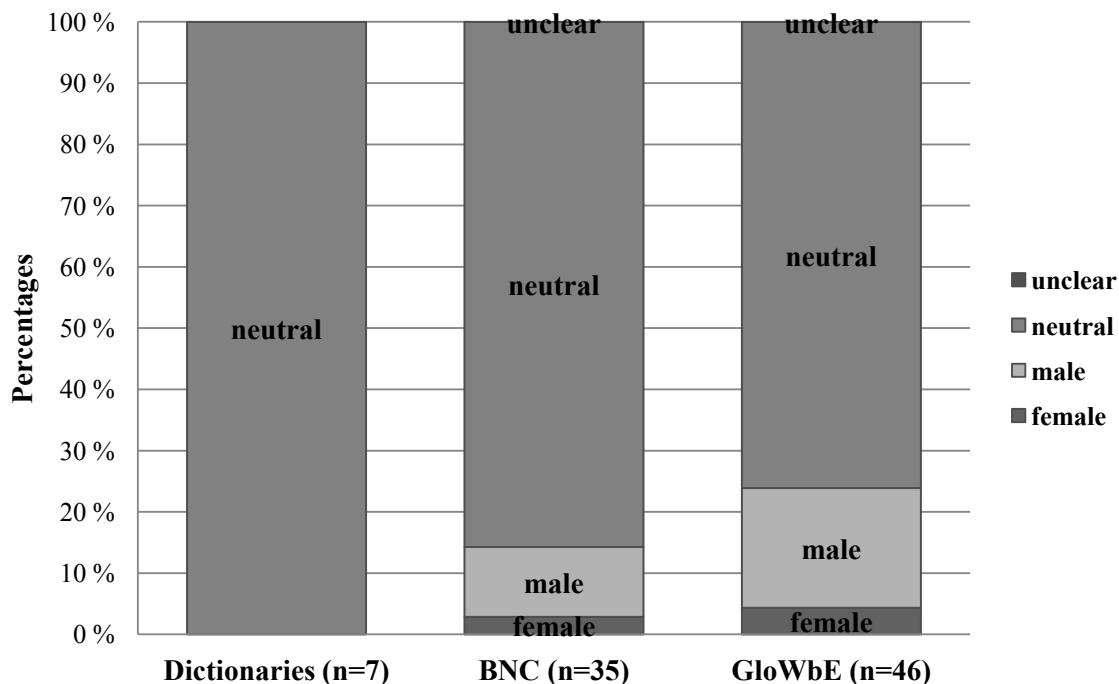


FIGURE 1. Gender-references of *long johns* in the dictionaries and corpora studied.

In BNC only one token, and in GloWbE only two tokens of a female wearing *long johns* is found, whereas in Norri's newspaper corpus there are 13. What also needs to be noted that although the dictionary definitions shown in Figure 1 are all classified as neutral, male wearers can be seen as implied in four of the dictionaries studied since *long johns* are defined as *underpants*, which are

most often seen as a male garment. Two of the dictionaries studied define *long johns* as underwear, which can denote the underwear worn by either gender. As already discussed in conjunction to the corpus results, the newspaper corpus studied by Norri (1998, 278) included tokens of *long johns* being worn by women both as overwear and underwear. However, in the material from BNC and GloWbE, most of the usage seems to be of wearing *long johns* as underwear, since layering of clothes, cold climates and especially in GloWbE, *thermal long johns* are often mentioned.

Therefore, based on the material studied here, it would seem that *long johns* are still more male clothing than female clothing, however, there is consistently neutral and female usage as well. It would seem that *long johns* are still in the second stage of gender-referential shifts, since there are regular crossings of the previous gender boundary, but it cannot be yet stated that *long johns* would be just as equally worn by men and women. The female usage of slim and elastic trousers as overwear may be covered by *leggings*, which could explain why similar usage of *long johns* as overwear reported by Norri (ibid., 278) was not so much found in this material. However, the number of tokens overall is fairly low, which also needs to be taken into account.

To continue with words shifting towards more gender-neutral usage, *swimsuit* seems to be more and more often worn by men and not just women, as can be seen in Figure 2, below. When comparing the results from BNC and GloWbE, the percentage of women wearing *swimsuits* has decreased, while the male and neutral usage has increased when we come to the newer corpus material from the early 2010's provided by GloWbE. Women (26%, n=92) according to GloWbE still wear *swimsuits* more than men (2%, n=6), but the *neutral* category covers 71% (n=249) of the tokens. Of the dictionaries studied, *CCE* defines *swimsuit* as *especially* female, and *OED* mentions both neutral and female wearers. Both of these are included under the female category in Figure 2, which makes the female category seem larger.

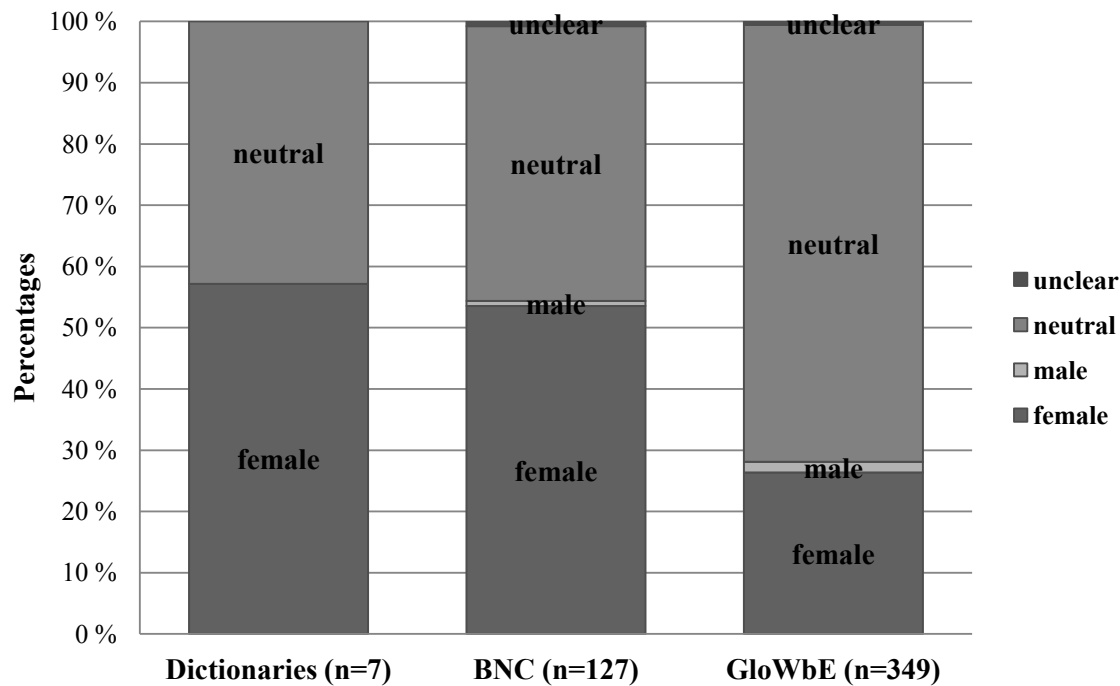


FIGURE 2. Gender-references of *swimsuit* in the dictionaries and corpora studied.

As already noted by Norri (1998, 276) *swimsuit* appears to be expanding from a female garment to a unisex swimming garment. This is especially seen in the material from GloWbE, which includes many tokens of *swimsuit* used in referring to the engineered swimming apparel targeted for competitive swimming and worn by either gender. Based on the material studied here, it would seem that *swimsuit* is indeed moving towards unisex usage although the female usage is still clearly more frequent than male usage, therefore it perhaps cannot yet be stated that it would have reached the third stage. However, if similar development continues *swimsuit* may well reach the third stage distinguished by Norri (1998), where neither male nor female referents dominate.

Another word that is shifting towards more unisex usage seems to be *undies*. As shown in Figure 3 (below), according to the corpora studied, male and neutral usage are on the rise, while at the same time the number of females wearing *undies* is on the decline. Of the material from GloWbE, only 18% (n=33) of the tokens are of females as designated wearers of *undies* although of course the neutral category contains some female, or male, wearers which I have not been able to

classify as other than neutral. Male wearers cover already 13% (n=24) of the wearers of *undies* found in GloWbE. Only two of the dictionaries studied, *CCE* and *OED*, define *undies* as exclusively female garment, while three dictionaries studied define them as *especially* female, and two gender-neutrally. The proportion of female wearers in the dictionaries studied appears to be larger in the figure since the three dictionaries that defined *undies* as *especially* female are also included under female.

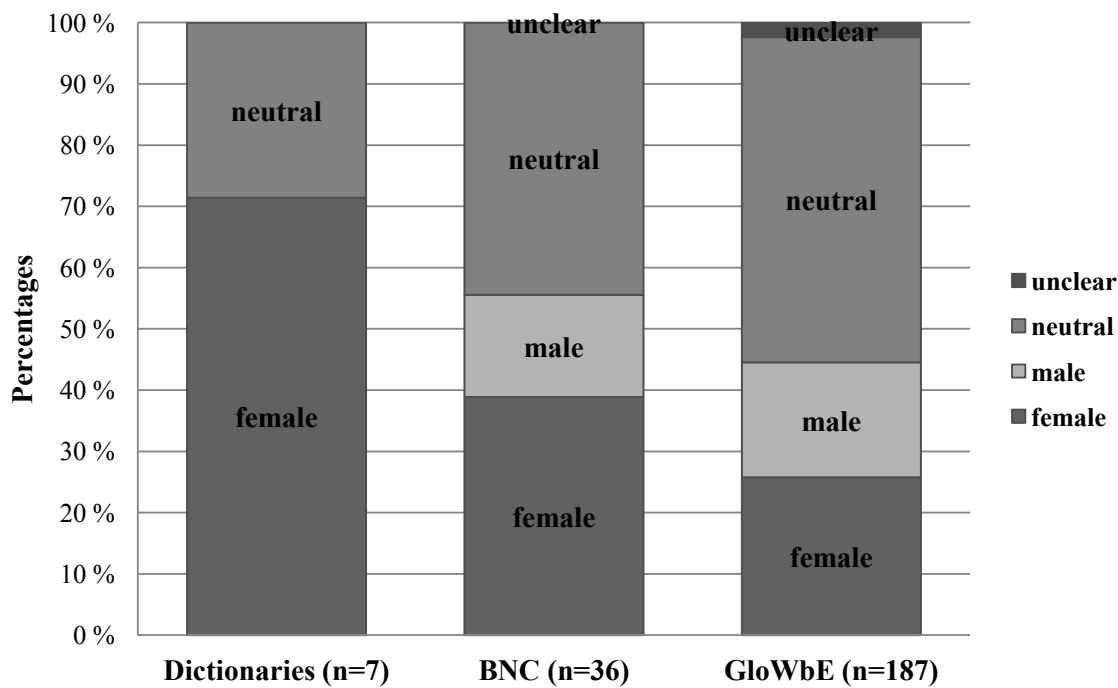


FIGURE 3. Gender-references of *undies* in the dictionaries and corpora studied.

If the shifting of the gender-reference of *undies* continues in this manner, it may well reach the third stage relatively shortly. As already discussed, *undies* broadening its usage towards unisex clothing is especially interesting because the diminutive *-ie* ending that is usually typical of women's clothing, such as *nightie*, *undies* and *combies*, as is noted by Norri (1998, 277).

8.1.3 Placing clothing words not included in Norri's 1998 study in the five stages

This subsection discusses the words not included in Norri's (1998) study and how these words could be placed in the five stages of gender-referential shifts, because one of the aims of this study was to find out if the model of five stages is applicable to other words for items of clothing. Firstly, I wanted to study if corpus evidence supports Arnold's (2010) claim that *shawls* are worn by women, *guernseys/ganseys* by men, and *jumpers* are gender-neutral.

Only a very small number of tokens of *gansey* and *guersey* were found, since when both possible spellings are counted together, only 16 relevant tokens were found in BNC, and 11 in GloWbE. Additionally, two of the dictionaries studied do not list either spelling. Dictionaries that do include *gansey* or *guernsey*, define it as neutral or (*originally*) male garment. The *OED* defines it as worn by seamen, whereas, the corpus tokens include male, female and neutral wearers. Although the corpus evidence here is not plenty, it would seem that *ganseys* and *guernseys* can also be worn by women. However, based on such small amount of data I am somewhat hesitant to place the word in any stage, but, if a stage would need to be chosen, it would probably be the second stage, where there are regular crossings of the original gender association, since the dictionaries include neutral definitions, and the corpora studied includes female wearers.

When it comes to *jumper*, it is defined by almost all of the dictionaries studied gender-neutrally. Similarly, in both corpora, neutral is clearly the largest group of wearers, while females and males cover both approximately the same portion of wearers, around 20% in BNC, and around 10% in GloWbE. Therefore today *jumper* would certainly seem to be a gender-neutral garment. However, when looking for the possible original gender association of *jumper*, matters are somewhat complicated. *OED* lists as the earliest sense of *jumper* from the latter half of the 1800's a garment worn by men:

OED s.v. jumper:

1. A kind of loose outer jacket or shirt reaching to the hips, made of canvas, serge, coarse linen, etc., and worn by sailors, truckmen, etc.; (also) any upper garment of similar shape, e.g. a hooded fur jacket worn by the Inuit.
- 3.a. = JERSEY n.1 3a; (also) a loose-fitting blouse worn over a skirt.

The earliest examples of sense 3 date from the beginning of 1900's. The distinguishing factor in the construction of the garment seems to be that the first sense lists garments made from woven fabric or fur, whereas sense 3 refers to *jersey*, which is defined by *OED* as follows as a knitted garment:

OED s.v. jersey: 3. a. A woollen knitted close-fitting tunic, with short or long sleeves; applied esp. to that worn as a sole covering of the body in athletic exercises and sports; also, to a similar woollen garment worn either as an outer tunic by seamen, children, etc., or as an under-shirt or under-vest; also, to a close-fitting knitted tunic or jacket worn by women.

The earliest usage examples given of *jersey* date from the 1800's. As can be seen, the definition of *jersey* mentions men, women and children as possible wearers of *jersey*. When looking at the definitions given by *OED* for *jumper*, the first sense refers to male wearers, however, if we only look at sense 3 and the knitted version of *jumper*, it would seem that it may have been a gender-neutral garment from the beginning, as is suggested in Arnold's study (2010). Therefore, if the originally male garment in sense 1 is seen as the starting point, jumper could then be placed in the third stage of gender-referential shifts where neither male nor female referents dominate. However, more studies would perhaps be necessary to see how central the first sense listed in *OED* is in the history of *jumper*.

When it comes to *shawl*, Arnold (2010) states that the knitted *shawls* made on Fair Isle are female garments. As can be seen in Figure 4 (below) *shawls* are not only worn by women or girls according to the material studied here. Of the dictionaries studied, six define *shawl* as an *especially* female garment, or mention both gender-neutral and female wearers. These were included under female in the figure, which makes the female category seem more prominent than it actually is. Of the dictionaries studied, *ChD* defines *shawl* gender-neutrally. When comparing the corpus results, the number of female wearers has lessened while the number of male wearers has increased when comparing BNC and GloWbE. In GloWbE, male wearers cover 7% (n=26) of the usage of *shawl*.

However, the male wearers in GloWbE seem to be mostly of quite a different cultural origin than the Fair Isle knitted shawls. Men are especially mentioned as wearers of *shawls* in association to the Asia and Middle East, and Jewish prayer shawls are mentioned in some tokens.

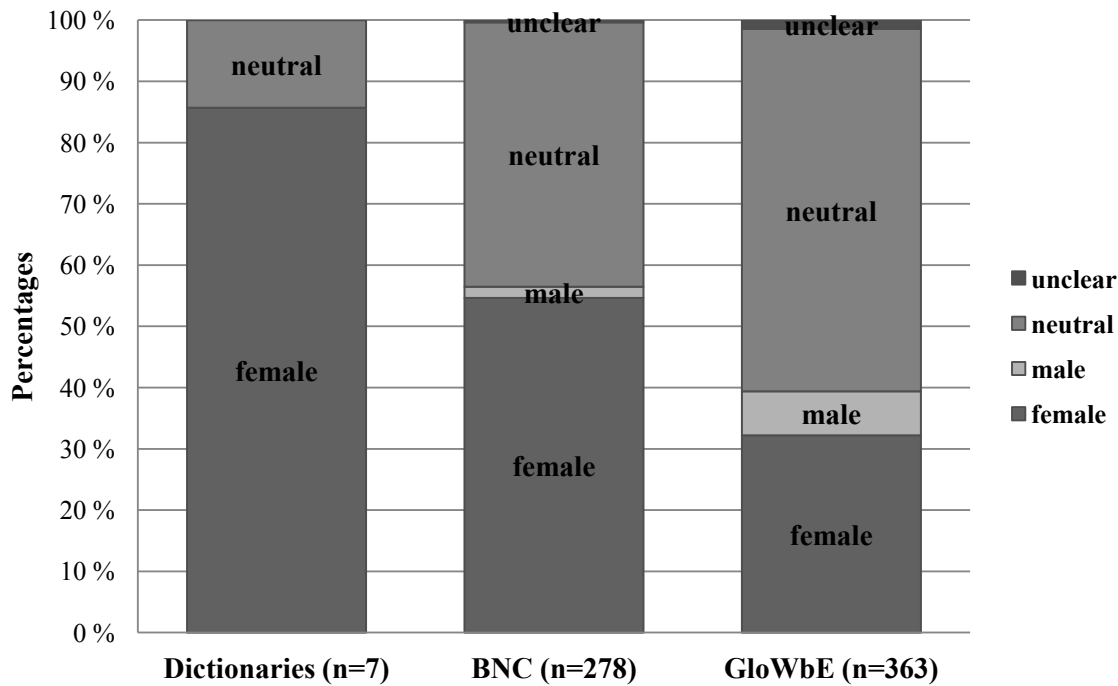


FIGURE 4. Gender-references of *shawl* in the dictionaries and corpora studied.

Nevertheless, when looking at *shawl* in a wider cultural perspective than just the Fair Isle knits, it seems that *shawl* can be placed in the second stage of gender-referential shifts, where there are regular crossings of the original gender boundary. Overall, it seems that both *shawl* and *gansey/guersey* have shifted towards unisex clothing, whereas *jumper* as a knitted garment seems to have been gender-neutral all along.

Another addition to the words to be studied was *leggings*, which I included because they have become recently quite popular with women and girls. As it turns out, *leggings* have gone through quite an interesting development from an earlier meaning dating from the 1700's as protective coverings for the legs, or only for the lower part of the legs. This type of garment was most often worn by men, or is defined gender-neutrally by the dictionaries studied, whereas the newer usage of

leggings as tightly fitting trousers made from stretch fabric and worn especially by women seems to be taking over. The men wearing *leggings* in the corpora studied is partly explained by the more historical usage of *leggings*, and they are mentioned as worn when riding a horse and as *military leggings*. As Figure 5 (below) shows, the portion of male wearers of leggings is declining when comparing the results from BNC and GloWbE. In Figure 5, the number of dictionaries may seem confusing, but it is 14 because I had to count each sense as an individual token, since all the dictionaries studied, except *CALD*, listed at least two senses for *leggings*, one of them being neutral and the other one female.

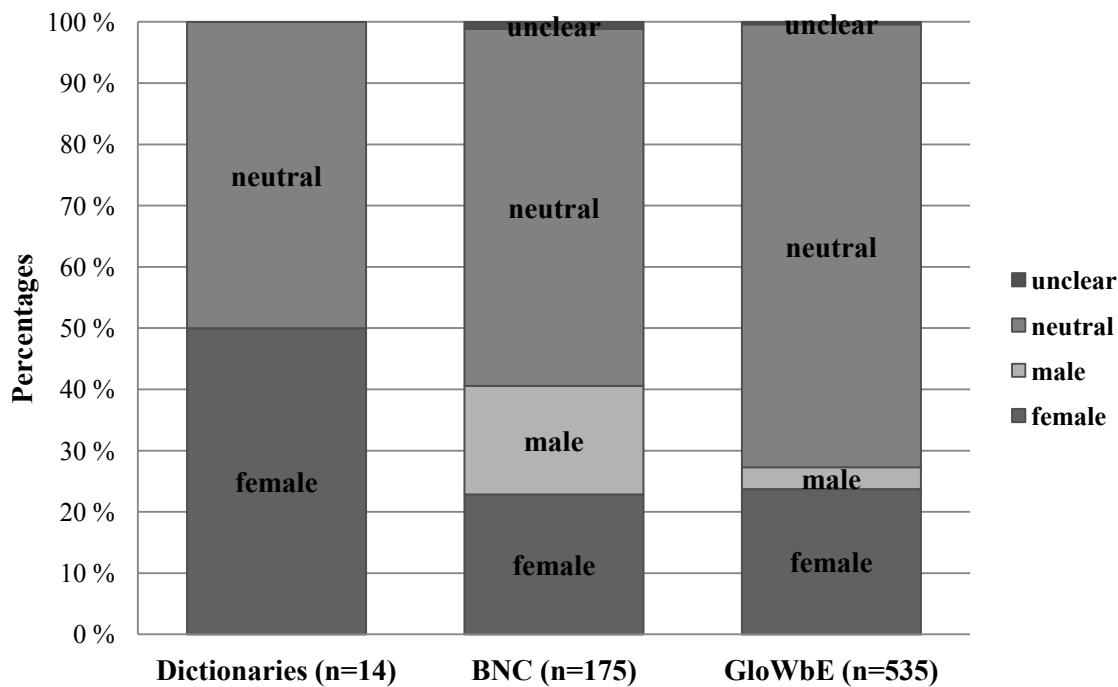


FIGURE 5. Gender-references of *leggings* in the dictionaries and corpora studied.

Therefore, based on this evidence, *leggings* could even be placed in the fourth stage, where the more recent gender association prevails, because the male wearers of *leggings* are clearly in the minority, especially in the material from GloWbE. However, the original association is not yet

completely forgotten, since male wearers are still found. Similarly, only one of the dictionaries studied, *CALD*, defines *leggings* only as tight fitting trousers usually worn by women.

Leggings also relate to the history of the *tightly clothed leg* discussed by Schoeser (1996). As Schoeser (ibid., 133) states: “For most of the six centuries prior to our own, an arrangement of attire that clearly revealed the shape of the legs was the predominant means of expressing masculine power and authority.” Additionally, Schoeser (ibid., 133) notes how this reversal of gender that has happened to the tightly clothed leg has merited much less notice than women’s adoption of trousers, i.e. the loosely clothed leg. As we can remember from multiple portraits of European kings and other men in powerful positions, tightly clothed legs are central in the image. For example, the famous School of Holbein portrait of Henry VIII shows the fashion of the time of contrasting tightly fitted stockings with very wide shoulders (pictured in Laver 1982, 82). As noted by Schoeser (ibid., 140), the reversal of the tightly clothed leg today is almost complete, since the sheathed leg is usually only accepted for men in athletic activities. However, after Schoeser’s article, published 1996, we have seen the return to more tightly fitted jeans, etc, which are also appropriate for men, however, the almost see-through stocking-like garments of the past would still perhaps seem odd on anyone else but women and children.

When it comes to *high-heeled shoes*, the word may have gone through somewhat similar developments than *leggings*. In the fashions of the earlier centuries, shoes with higher heels were often worn by men. As Laver (1982, 106) notes of fashions during the 1600’s, the shoes for women were often simpler than those for men, since the long skirts women wore concealed the shoes. Contrastingly, the tightly clothed legs typical of male garments for centuries, as discussed above, allowed shoes to show and become a part of the costume. In the material studied here, women cover 69% (n=34) of the wearers of *high-heeled shoes* in BNC, and 30% (n=16) in GloWbE, while men are mentioned as wearing *high-heeled shoes* only in some individual tokens. Similarly, majority of the dictionaries that include the word define it as worn by women. However, as *OED* is one of the

dictionaries that did not include the word, I cannot really say very much about the history of *high-heeled shoes* without further studies. If the situation is as it seems, that *high-heeled shoes* were at least in the Western context first worn by men, it would seem that *high-heeled shoes* have now shifted to be mostly worn by women.

Finally, I will shortly discuss two more words included in the study. I decided to include *knickers* in the words to be studied, because it was more frequent than *French knickers* in the earlier study by Norri (1996, 100). It seems to behave quite similarly as *French knickers*, since in both corpora studied the majority of wearers are women, and six of the dictionaries studied define *knickers* as female clothing. There are 24 tokens (3%) of men wearing knickers in GloWbE, but most of them seem to be humorous use, or somehow implying unwanted femininity in men. Therefore, *knickers* still seem to be very much associated to women. I also included *tanga(s)*, which was included in Norri's (1996) study. However, there were no tokens found in BNC and GloWbE only includes four tokens. Similarly, majority of the dictionaries studied do not include the word, therefore I do not really have enough material to place *tanga(s)* in any stage.

8.2 Suggestions for further studies

Since clothing vocabulary and especially changing gender-references in vocabulary have been studied very little, there are multiple possibilities for further studies. Gendered language use from the viewpoint pronouns and occupational terms has been discussed quite widely in conjunction to the feminist language planning, but other viewpoints seem to have merited very little studies. As Curzan's (2003) study shows, words used in denoting men or women have shifted genders throughout the long history of the English language, and it is not only words denoting women and men that deserve more study.

Further studies could use this study as a comparison point to see if the gender-referential shifts observed have continued. For further studies, the classification system would perhaps need to

be adjusted so that corpus tokens where both genders are mentioned would be in their own category and not in the same one with neutral tokens. Further studies could be expanded to cover more clothing words, more material, and different varieties of English could be compared. Collocational patterns of clothing words in corpora could also be an interesting area of study.

As a side note from this material, it would seem that clothing words are a part in many idiomatic phrases. Some of these, especially those that include women's clothing seem to have quite negative meanings. Such as *petticoat government*, defined by *OD* as follows:

OD s.v. petticoat government: noun *depreciative* Rule by, or undue predominance or influence of women in domestic, political, or public life.

The list continues: *you're a big girl's blouse*, *don't get your knickers in a twist*, *bore the pants off somebody*, etc. Surprisingly large part of these idioms seem to reflect clothing, especially women's clothing, in somehow negative manner. Of course the world of textiles relates to the everyday and textiles can be easily broken and worn out, which may relate to the lack of appreciation for at least the everyday clothes. However, the cultural image of clothing and gender created through idiomatic phrases, proverbs and similar material might be an interesting angle for study.

Additionally, words shifting gender make quite a specific type of semantic change, but this seems to have merited very little attention in studies discussing semantic change happening to English words. As an example of a way of understanding lexical semantic change, Blank (1999) proposes a typology of the motivations for lexical semantic change, which is based on a corpus study. One of the categories proposed by Blank (*ibid.*, 72–3) is sociocultural change. It could be one way of explaining the shifting gender of clothing words, especially in the cases where our society has changed so that women are allowed to participate in a wider range of social fields, which requires different kind of clothing as well. As for example Cameron (2015, 357) notes, women and men in educated and well-to-do circles are less different from each other than ever before.

Blank (*ibid.*, 72) describes sociocultural change as follows:

Changes in our conception of the world can also lead to the transformation of an already existing complex conceptual system by the loss of one or more concepts, by shifting concepts or by introducing new ones.

This shifting of concepts could perhaps include shifting genders. However, as examples of this category of change, Blank (ibid., 72–3) gives examples of changing legal concepts and names for meal times, therefore I am slightly hesitant to place shifting genders in this category. As can be seen, semantic change when it comes to words changing gender needs to be studied more, so that this kind of process of language change could be better understood.

9. Conclusion

This section concludes the main findings and implications of this study. One of the aims of this study was to find out how the gender-references of certain items of clothing may have changed from the studies conducted by Norri (1996, 1998), and to hopefully give some reasons for the possible changes. Another aim was to expand the material collected with the help of different corpora, including BNC and GloWbE, to see if this corpus material also supports the stages, and to study some additional clothing words which were not included in the studies by Norri to see if these words can be placed in the five stages of gender-referential shifts presented by Norri (1998).

The corpus evidence from BNC shows that the clothing words studied here can be placed in the same stages as in Norri's study, which was based on dictionary definitions and a newspaper corpus. However, the newspapers studied by Norri (1998) showed some gender-crossings of *Y-fronts* and *French knickers* which were not found in BNC or GloWbE, but this did not change the stages of these words, since they were placed by Norri in the first stage, based on the dictionary definitions studied. This shows the value of material triangulation, which was also utilized in this study by studying two corpora and seven dictionaries.

The material from GloWbE and the dictionaries studied were used to study if the gender-references had changed further. Based on the material studied here, it would seem that *undies* and *swimsuit* are continuing to shift towards unisex clothing. However, the words studied kept their respective stages when compared with Norri's (1998) findings, but if similar development continues, especially *swimsuit* and *undies* may reach the third stage, where neither male nor female referents dominate in the future.

This study also included clothing words not included in the previous studies by Norri. My aim was to find out if these words can also be placed in one of the five stages. Of these, *leggings* proved to be an interesting find, since it was first male clothing but has now shifted all the way to the fourth stage, where the more recent gender-association to women's clothing prevails. Overall, most of the additional words could be placed in the stages, and if not, it was due to lack of data on the particular word. However, *jumper* as a knitted garment is interesting since it seems to have started as a gender-neutral garment, and not have gone through any gender shifts to get there, as all of the other garments studied. Additionally, it may be that a word never progresses beyond the first stage of shifting gender, as noted by Norri (1998, 274). As Norri (ibid., 286) states, it may not be easy to place a word in the created categorization. The categories do not have any clear cut boundaries, and I did find it difficult to place some of the words, and especially to decide if there was enough shifting of gender happening to place the word in stages two or three. However, this is in no way surprising when studying qualitative material.

Another interesting finding is that the shifts of gender are not limited to only one direction. *Swimsuit* and *undies* are originally female garments which are shifting towards unisex usage, whereas *leggings* are originally a male garment now winningly worn by women. However, gender-neutralization seems to be happening to several words and gender-neutralization is also according to Romaine (2001, 156) typical of the feminist linguistic reform in the English-speaking world. Gender-neutralization may also relate to a move away from the strict division of gender into two

groups: male and female. As for the future, Freed (2014, 641) asks: “how we can move the public to a conceptualization of gender that abandons a strict ideology of male-female ‘difference’ for one that emphasizes human ‘diversity’”.

As for the implications of this study, I would hope that this study could serve as a basis for further studies in studying if the gender-references of the words studied have continued to change. Additionally, when it comes to dictionaries, perhaps more attention would need to be paid to how gender is represented in the dictionaries, especially in dictionaries for learners. Overall, there lies a hazard in using a clothing word in defining another clothing word, since, as we have seen, the assumed gender of the wearer can change and therefore change the definition.

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APPENDIX 1. All dictionary definitions included in this study.

word	<i>The Collins English Dictionary</i>	<i>The Collins COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary</i>	<i>The Chambers Dictionary</i>	<i>The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionaries</i>	<i>The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>blazer</i>	noun a fairly lightweight jacket, often striped or in the colours of a sports club, school, etc	countable noun A blazer is a kind of jacket which is often worn by members of a particular group, especially schoolchildren and members of a sports team.	noun a light jacket, often in the colours of a school or club and sometimes worn as part of a uniform.	noun [countable] a jacket, sometimes with the special sign of a school, club etc on it	1A coloured jacket worn by schoolchildren or sports players as part of a uniform. 1.1 A plain jacket not forming part of a suit but considered appropriate for formal wear.	noun [C] a type of formal jacket that is a different colour from the trousers or skirt that are worn with it. In the UK a blazer often has the symbol of a school or organization sewn on the front pocket and is worn as part of a uniform: <i>my new/old school blazer</i>	1 b. A light jacket of bright colour worn at cricket or other sports. Now usually an unlined jacket of lightweight material (often flannel), frequently with coloured stripes, decorated edges, or a badge on the breast-pocket, worn esp. with sports clothes or as part of a school uniform.
<i>bloomers</i>	plural noun 1. informal women's or girls' baggy knickers 2. (formerly) loose trousers gathered at the knee worn by women for cycling and athletics 3. Also called: rational dress history long loose trousers gathered	plural noun [oft a pair of NOUN] Bloomers are an old-fashioned kind of women's underwear which consists of wide, loose trousers gathered at the knees.	plural noun 1 colloq, facetious or old use women's underpants or knickers, especially large or baggy ones. 2 (also bloomer trousers) historical loose trousers for women, gathered at the knee or ankle, to be worn (eg for cycling) with a close-fitting jacket and a skirt falling	[plural] underwear that women wore in the past, like loose trousers that end at the knees	plural noun 1 Women's loose-fitting knee-length knickers, considered old-fashioned. 1.1 historical Women's and girls' loose-fitting trousers, gathered at the knee or, originally, the ankle.	[plural] in the past, large, loose underwear worn below the waist by women in the past, long, loose trousers made to fit tightly around the ankles, worn by women under a skirt or for sports	1. b. Regularly in pl. Loose trousers reaching to the knee or knickerbockers worn by women for bicycling, gymnasium practice, etc.; called also 'rational dress'. Also, a woman's knee-length undergarment (the usual sense in later usage).

APPENDIX 1 cont.

	at the ankle and worn under a shorter skirt		to just below the knee.				
<i>blouse</i>	<p>noun</p> <p>1 a woman's shirtlike garment made of cotton, nylon, etc</p> <p>2 a loose-fitting smocklike garment, often knee length and belted, worn esp by E European peasants</p> <p>3 a loose-fitting waist-length belted jacket worn by soldiers</p>	<p>countable noun</p> <p>A blouse is a kind of shirt worn by a girl or woman.</p>	<p>noun 1 a woman's garment very similar to a shirt. 2 (<i>also battle-blouse and battle-dress blouse</i>) <i>especially formerly</i> a loose jacket belted or gathered in at the waist, forming part of a soldier's or airman's uniform.</p>	<p>noun</p> <p>[countable] a shirt for women</p> <p><i>a silk blouse</i></p>	<p>1A woman's upper garment resembling a shirt, typically with a collar, buttons, and sleeves.</p> <p>1.1 A loose linen or cotton garment formerly worn by peasants and manual workers, typically belted at the waist.</p> <p>1.2 A type of jacket worn as part of military uniform.</p>	<p>noun [C]</p> <p>A1 a shirt for a woman or girl:</p> <p><i>a white silk blouse</i></p>	<p>1.a. A light loose upper garment of linen or cotton, resembling a shirt or smock-frock; properly applied (as an alien term) to the well-known blue blouse of the French workman, but in England sometimes used loosely to designate more or less similar garments.</p> <p>3. A loosely-fitting bodice worn by women and girls, usually tucked inside the skirt at the waist. Also, formerly called blouse-bodice</p>
<i>briefs</i>	<p>plural noun</p> <p>men's underpants or women's pants without legs</p>	-	-	<p>[plural] men's or women's underwear worn on the lower part of the body</p>	<p>plural noun</p> <p>Short, close-fitting underpants or knickers.</p> <p><i>'a pair of blue briefs'</i></p>	<p>"briefs" in American English</p> <p>plural noun</p> <p>underwear worn by men and women which covers the area between the waist and the tops of the legs</p> <p>(Definition from the Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary)</p>	<p>11. pl. Very short knickers (see knickers n. 2), or trunks.</p>

APPENDIX 1 cont.

<i>French knickers</i>	plural noun women's wide-legged underpants	-	plural noun a type of wide-legged knickers, normally made from silk or a silky material.	-	plural noun Loose-fitting, wide-legged knickers, typically of silk or satin.	noun [plural] loose knickers (= women's underwear) with wide legs	s.v. <i>French</i> n. chiefly <i>Brit.</i> , <i>Austral.</i> , and <i>N.Z.</i> a type of (usually loose-fitting) women's knickers or underpants resembling shorts, typically made of a material such as lace or satin.
<i>gansey</i>	noun <i>dialect</i> a jersey or pullover	-	noun (ganseys or gansies) a woollen sweater; a jersey (sense 1).	-	noun <i>West Indian dialect</i> A sweater or T-shirt.	noun [C] a thick, knitted sweater made of wool, of a type originally worn by fishermen Synonym guernsey <i>informal</i> a sweater of any kind	<i>regional.</i> A jersey; = Guernsey n. 2a.
<i>guernsey</i>	3. (sometimes not capital) a seaman's knitted woollen sweater	-	noun 1 a hand-knitted woollen pullover, originally one worn by sailors	-	noun Plural guernseys, Plural Guernseys 2A thick sweater made with oiled navy-blue wool and originally worn by fishermen.	noun [C] a thick, knitted sweater made of wool, of a type originally worn by fishermen: <i>The rugged, weatherbeaten face would have looked more appropriate above a seaman's guernsey.</i> Synonym gansey	2. In senses originally elliptical. a. A thick, knitted, closely-fitting vest or shirt, generally made of blue wool, worn by seamen.
<i>high-heeled shoes</i>	noun shoes having high, rather than flat, heels	s.v. <i>high-heeled</i> adjective [ADJECTIVE noun] High-heeled shoes	-	s.v. <i>high heels</i> noun [plural] women's shoes with high heels	s.v. <i>high-heeled</i> adjective (of a woman's shoes) having tall, thin	s.v. <i>high heels</i> noun [plural] women's shoes in which the heels are	-

APPENDIX 1 cont.

		are women's shoes that have high heels.			heels.	raised high off the ground	
<i>jacket</i>	noun 1. a short coat, esp one that is hip-length and has a front opening and sleeves 2. something that resembles this or is designed to be worn around the upper part of the body <i>a life jacket</i>	1. countable noun A jacket is a short coat with long sleeves. ...a black leather jacket. Synonyms: coat, blazer	1 a short coat, especially a long- sleeved, hip-length one.	noun [countable] 1 a short light coat a leather/denim/ linen etc jacket → bomber jacket, dinner jacket, life jacket, straitjacket(1) 2 the part of a suit that covers the top part of your body <i>Gene has to wear a jacket and tie to work.</i> tweed jackets → sports jacket	noun Plural jackets 1 An outer garment extending either to the waist or the hips, typically having sleeves and a fastening down the front. as modifier ' <i>he put his hand in his jacket pocket</i> '	noun[C] (CLOTHES) A1 a short coat: <i>a leather/denim/tweed jacket</i> <i>The keys are in my jacket pocket.</i>	1.a. An outer garment for the upper part of the body: orig. the same as, or a shorter form of the jack; now, an outer garment with sleeves, reaching no lower than the waist, worn by boys (as an Eton jacket) and by men in certain occupations; also a short coat without tails (as a Norfolk jacket), worn in shooting, riding, cycling, etc. 1.c. A woman's outer garment analogous to that of boys or men, either loose or close- fitting, and of varying length.
<i>jumper</i>	noun 1. mainly British a knitted or crocheted garment covering the upper part of the body	countable noun A jumper is a warm knitted piece of clothing which covers the upper part of your body and your arms. (British) <i>Isabel had on a simple jumper and skirt.</i>	noun 1 a knitted garment for the top half of the body. <i>N Amer equivalent</i> sweater. See also pullover.	noun [countable] 1 British English a piece of clothing made of wool that covers the upper part of your body and arms SYN sweater, pullover	1 British A knitted garment typically with long sleeves, worn over the upper body. 2 <i>historical</i> A loose outer jacket worn by sailors.	UK a piece of clothing with long sleeves that is usually made from wool, is worn on the upper part of the body and does not open at the front: <i>a red woolly jumper</i>	1. A kind of loose outer jacket or shirt reaching to the hips, made of canvas, serge, coarse linen, etc., and worn by sailors, truckmen, etc.; (also) any upper garment of similar shape, e.g. a hooded fur jacket worn by the Inuit. 3.a. = jersey n.1 3a;

APPENDIX 1 cont.

							(also) a loose-fitting blouse worn over a skirt.
<i>knickers</i>	plural noun 1. an undergarment for women covering the lower trunk and sometimes the thighs and having separate legs or leg-holes	1. plural noun [oft a pair of NOUN] Knickers are a piece of underwear worn by women and girls which have holes for the legs and elastic around the waist to hold them up. [British] <i>She bought Ann two bras and six pairs of knickers.</i> regional note: in AM, use panties	plural noun an undergarment with two separate legs or legholes. They are worn by women and girls, and cover part or all of the lower abdomen and buttocks and sometimes the thighs.	noun [plural] 1 British English a piece of women's underwear worn between the waist and the top of the legs SYN panties <i>a pair of frilly knickers</i>	plural noun 1 <i>British</i> A woman's or girl's undergarment covering the lower part of the torso to the top of the thighs and having two holes for the legs.	noun [plural B1 UK US panties a piece of underwear worn by women and girls covering the area between the waist and the tops of the legs: <i>a pair of black cotton knickers</i>	2. a With <i>pl.</i> concord. A short-legged (orig. knee-length), freq. loose-fitting, pair of pants worn by women and children as an undergarment. In extended use, the shorts worn by boxers, footballers, etc.
<i>leggings</i>	plural noun 1. an extra outer covering for the lower legs 2.close-fitting trousers worn by women and children	1. plural noun [oft a pair of NOUN] Leggings are close-fitting trousers, usually made out of a stretchy fabric, that are worn by women and girls. <i>She is wearing tight, black leggings and a baggy green jersey.</i> 2. plural noun [oft a pair of NOUN] Leggings are an outer covering of leather or other strong material, often in the form of	plural noun 1 close-fitting stretch coverings for the legs, worn by girls and women. 2 <i>formerly</i> outer and extra protective coverings for the lower legs.	noun [plural] 1 tight trousers for women, which stretch to fit the shape of your body 2 a pair of trousers that you wear over other clothes to protect your legs	plural noun 1 Tight-fitting stretch trousers, typically worn by women or girls. 2 Strong protective overgarments for the legs.	noun [plural] very tight trousers made from a material that stretches easily, usually worn by women: <i>a pair of leggings</i>	1. Chiefly in pl a. Each of a pair of coverings for the legs, or the lower part of the legs from the ankle to the knee, typically of leather or cloth; (sometimes) <i>spec.</i> each of a pair of strong additional coverings used to give extra protection to the legs in bad weather or rough conditions. Chiefly <i>N. Amer.</i> in early use. 3. In <i>pl.</i> a. Any of various close-fitting garments for the

APPENDIX 1 cont.

		trousers, that you wear over your normal trousers in order to protect them. ...a pair of leggings to slip on over your other clothes.					legs, resembling trousers or tights, and worn esp. by children. See also sense 3b b. <i>spec.</i> Tight-fitting trousers made of a stretch fabric, worn esp. by women and girls.
<i>long johns</i>	plural noun <i>informal</i> underpants with long legs. Also called (informal): longies	plural noun [oft a pair of NOUN] Long johns are warm underpants with long legs.	plural noun, <i>colloq</i> underpants with long legs, worn for warmth.	noun [plural] warm underwear with long legs	plural noun <i>informal</i> Underpants with closely fitted legs that extend to the wearer's ankles.	noun [plural] US also: long underwear underwear with long legs, worn under your outer clothes to keep you warm	3. <i>colloq.</i> (orig. <i>U.S.</i>). In <i>pl.</i> Underpants with closely fitted legs that extend to the wearer's ankles, worn for warmth during cold weather; (more generally) long underwear of any kind. Also in <i>sing.</i> (chiefly <i>attrib.</i>).
<i>pants</i>	plural noun 1. British an undergarment reaching from the waist to the thighs or knees 2. Also called: trousers a garment shaped to cover the body from the waist to the ankles or knees with separate tube-shaped sections for both legs	1. plural noun [oft a pair of NOUN] Pants are a piece of underwear which have two holes to put your legs through and elastic around the top to hold them up round your waist or hips. [British] <i>I put on my bra and pants.</i> regional note: in AM, usually use underpants	plural noun 1 <i>Brit</i> an undergarment worn over the buttocks and genital area; underpants. 2 <i>N Amer</i> trousers.	noun [plural] 1 <i>especially American English</i> a piece of clothing that covers you from your waist to your feet and has a separate part for each leg SYN trousers <i>British English</i> <i>She was wearing dark blue pants and a white sweater.</i>	plural noun 1 <i>British</i> Underpants or knickers. 2 <i>North American</i> Trousers. 'corduroy pants' 'wide pant legs'	noun [plural] B1 UK also underpants a piece of underwear covering the area between the waist and the tops of the legs A1 US UK trousers a piece of clothing that covers the lower part of the body from the waist to the feet, consisting of two cylinder-shaped parts, one for each leg, that are joined at the top:	orig. <i>U.S.</i> 1.a. Originally (<i>colloq.</i>): pantaloons. Later: trousers of any kind (in early use applied to men's trousers, but in the 20th cent. extended to include those worn by both men and women). 3. Chiefly <i>Brit.</i> (Men's or women's) underpants.

APPENDIX 1 cont.

				2 <i>British English</i> a piece of underwear that covers the area between your waist and the top of your legs SYN underpants		<i>a pair of pants</i> <i>Why aren't you wearing any pants, David?</i>	
<i>petticoat</i>	noun 1. a woman's light undergarment in the form of an underskirt or including a bodice supported by shoulder straps	countable noun A petticoat is a piece of clothing like a thin skirt, which is worn under a skirt or dress.[old-fashioned] Synonyms: underskirt, slip, undergarment, half-slip	noun 1 a woman's underskirt. 2 (petticoats) <i>historical skirts</i> in general, or those worn by boys in early childhood in particular	noun [countable] <i>British English</i> a piece of women's underwear like a thin skirt or dress that is worn under a skirt or dress SYN slip	noun A woman's light, loose undergarment hanging from the shoulders or the waist, worn under a skirt or dress.	noun [C] <i>old-fashioned</i> a slip noun	1.a. A man's tight-fitting undercoat, usually padded and worn under a doublet and over a shirt; (also) a padded jerkin worn under armour for protection. Now <i>hist.</i> 2. A woman's or girl's garment. c. A light loose undergarment (originally of calico, flannel, silk, etc.; now frequently of synthetic material) hanging from the shoulders or waist, and worn by a woman or girl under a dress or skirt for warmth, etc. (Now the usual sense.)
<i>shawl</i>	noun a piece of fabric or knitted or crocheted material worn	countable noun A shawl is a large piece of woollen cloth which a woman wears over her shoulders or	noun a large single piece of fabric used to cover the head or shoulders or to	[countable] a piece of cloth, in a square or triangular shape, that is worn around the	noun A piece of fabric worn by women over the shoulders or head or wrapped	noun [C] a large piece of cloth worn especially by women or girls over	2.a. As the name of an article of clothing worn in Europe and the West, chiefly by women as a covering for the

APPENDIX 1 cont.

	around the shoulders by women or wrapped around a baby	head, or which is wrapped around a baby to keep it warm.	wrap a baby.	shoulders or head, especially by women	round a baby.	their shoulders and/or head	shoulders or, sometimes, for the head; originally applied to the imported 'cashmere shawl' (= sense 1 above: see cashmere n.), but in later use extended to denote an oblong or square piece of any textile or netted fabric, whether of wool, silk, cotton, or mixtures of these. b. Worn round the neck as a protection from cold.
<i>swimsuit</i>	noun 1 a woman's one-piece swimming garment that leaves the arms and legs bare	countable noun A swimsuit is a piece of clothing that is worn for swimming, especially by women and girls. Synonyms: swimming costume, swimwear, bathing suit, bikini	noun a garment worn for swimming.	noun [countable] a piece of clothing worn for swimming	noun A woman's one-piece swimming costume. .	noun [C] A2 a piece of clothing that you wear for swimming	s.v. <i>swim</i> swimsuit n. a (woman's) bathing costume.
<i>tanga(s)</i>	noun 1. a triangular loincloth worn by indigenous peoples in tropical America 2. a type of very brief bikini	-	noun (<i>tangas</i>) underpants for men or women which have no material at the sides other than the waistband.	-	noun British A pair of briefs consisting of small panels connected by strings at the sides. ' <i>tanga briefs</i> '	-	1. (See quot. 1960): the garment is also worn by men. 2. A bikini made of triangles of material joined by thin ties; <i>spec.</i> the lower half of this. Cf. string n. 6c.

APPENDIX 1 cont.

<i>trench coat</i>	noun a belted double-breasted waterproof coat of gabardine, etc, resembling a military officer's coat	countable noun A trench coat is a type of raincoat with pockets and a belt. Trench coats are often similar in design to military coats.	noun 1 a type of long raincoat that is usually double-breasted, has a belt and sometimes epaulettes. 2 a type of military overcoat.	noun [countable] a long raincoat with a belt	1 A loose belted, double-breasted raincoat in a military style. 1.1 A lined or padded waterproof coat worn by soldiers.	noun [C] a long, loose coat with a belt, usually made from waterproof material (= not allowing water through) and similar in style to a military coat	1. A lined or padded waterproof coat worn by soldiers, originally in the trenches during the First World War (1914–18). 2. A long loose coat, worn especially to keep off rain, typically double-breasted and with a belt and pockets in a style reminiscent of a military coat (see sense 1).
<i>undies</i>	plural noun (<i>informal</i>) underwear, esp women's or girls'	plural noun [oft poss NOUN] You can refer to a woman's or girl's underwear as their undies. [<i>informal</i>]	plural noun, <i>colloq</i> items of underwear, especially women's bras, pants, etc.	noun [plural] <i>informal</i> underwear	plural noun <i>informal</i> Articles of underwear, especially those of a woman or girl.	noun [plural] <i>informal</i> → underwear	<i>colloq.</i> With <i>pl.</i> concord. Articles of girls' or women's underclothing.
<i>Y-fronts</i>	plural noun <i>trademark</i> boys' or men's underpants having a front opening within an inverted Y shape	plural noun Y-fronts are men's or boys' underwear with an opening at the front. [British, trademark]	plural noun men's or boys' underpants with a Y-shaped front seam.	noun [plural] <i>trademark</i> British English men's underwear which has a part at the front shaped like an upside down Y	plural noun <i>British trademark</i> Men's or boys' underpants with a branching seam at the front in the shape of an upside-down Y.	noun [plural] <i>UK trademark</i> a brand name for a piece of underwear for men and boys, covering the area between the waist and the tops of the legs, with an opening at the front in the shape of an upside-down Y	s.v. <i>Y</i> <i>Y-front n.</i> a proprietary term for men's underwear, used esp. to denote close-fitting briefs with Y-shaped seaming at the front; frequently as <i>n. pl.</i> , briefs of this kind.

APPENDIX 2. Full corpus results. M= male, F= female, N= neutral, U= unclear, nf= normalized frequency per 1,000,000 words.

BNC	freq	M	M %	M nf	F	F %	F nf	N	N %	N nf	U	U%	U nf
blazer blazers	158	88	56	0.895	16	10	0.162	53	34	0.539	1	0	0.01
bloomers	29	2	7	0.02	17	59	0.172	8	28	0.081	2	6	0.02
blouse blouses	565	14	2	0.142	370	65	3.763	178	32	1.81	3	1	0.03
briefs	41	10	24	0.101	23	56	0.233	7	17	0.071	1	3	0.01
French knickers frenchknickers French knicker	8	0	0	0	6	75	0.061	2	25	0.02	0	0	0
gansey ganseys	1	1	100	0.01	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
guernsey guernseys	16	10	63	0.101	4	25	0.04	2	12	0.02	0	0	0
high-heeled shoes high heeled shoes highheeled shoes	49	2	4	0.02	34	69	0.345	13	27	0.132	0	0	0
jacket jackets	881	360	41	3.661	125	14	1.271	389	44	3.956	7	1	0.071
jumper jumpers	543	103	19	1.047	100	18	1.017	325	60	3.305	15	3	0.152
knickers	316	8	2	0.081	154	49	1.566	145	46	1.478	9	3	0.091
leggings leggings	175	31	18	0.315	40	23	0.406	102	58	1.037	2	1	0.02
long johns longjohns	35	4	11	0.04	1	3	0.01	30	86	0.305	0	0	0
pants	368	90	24	0.915	81	22	0.823	191	52	1.942	6	2	0.061
petticoat petticoats	127	2	2	0.02	68	53	0.691	54	43	0.549	3	2	0.03
shawl shawls	278	5	2	0.05	152	55	1.546	120	43	1.22	1	0	0.01
swimsuit swim suit swimsuits swim suits	127	1	1	0.01	68	54	0.691	57	45	0.579	1	1	0.01
tanga tangas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
trench coat trenchcoat trench coats trenchcoats trench-coat trench-coats	76	33	43	0.335	7	9	0.071	35	46	0.356	1	1	0.01
undies	36	6	16	0.061	14	39	0.142	16	45	0.162	0	0	0
Y-fronts yfronts y fronts	14	7	50	0.071	0	0	0	7	50	0.071	0	0	0

APPENDIX 2. cont.

GloWbE	freq	M	M %	M nf	F	F %	F nf	N	N %	N nf	U	U %	U nf
blazer blazers	601	126	21	0.325	36	6	0.092	417	69	1.075	22	4	0.056
bloomers	45	0	0	0	18	40	0.046	22	49	0.056	5	11	0.012
blouse blouses	707	22	3	0.056	269	38	0.693	409	58	1.055	7	1	0.018
briefs	143	32	22	0.082	17	12	0.043	82	58	0.211	12	8	0.03
French knickers frenchknickers French knicker	10	0	0	0	6	60	0.015	4	40	0.01	0	0	0
gansey ganseys	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	75	0.007	1	25	0.002
guernsey guernseys	7	0	0	0	1	14	0.002	6	86	0.015	0	0	0
high-heeled shoes high heeled shoes highheeled shoes	54	1	2	0.002	16	30	0.041	37	68	0.095	0	0	0
jacket jackets	902	174	19	0.448	76	8	0.196	636	71	1.64	16	2	0.041
jumper jumpers	718	91	13	0.234	63	9	0.162	531	74	1.369	33	4	0.085
knickers	796	24	3	0.061	334	42	0.861	419	53	1.08	19	2	0.049
leggings leggins	535	19	4	0.049	127	24	0.327	387	72	0.998	2	0	0.005
long johns longjohns	46	9	20	0.023	2	4	0.005	35	76	0.09	0	0	0
pants	646	160	25	0.412	84	13	0.216	362	56	0.933	40	6	0.103
petticoat petticoats	137	2	1	0.005	50	37	0.128	71	52	0.183	14	10	0.036
shawl shawls	363	26	7	0.067	117	32	0.301	215	59	0.554	5	1	0.012
swimsuit swim suit swimsuits swim suits	349	6	2	0.015	92	26	0.237	249	71	0.642	2	1	0.005
tanga tangas	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	100	0.01	0	0	0
trench coat trenchcoat trench coats trenchcoats trench-coat trench-coats	133	39	29	0.1	14	11	0.036	77	58	0.198	3	2	0.007
undies	187	24	13	0.061	33	18	0.085	127	68	0.327	3	1	0.007
Y-fronts yfronts y fronts	58	26	45	0.067	0	0	0	31	53	0.079	1	2	0.002